ADRIAN • CHAMPIONS LEAGUE • FABINHO • WIN SIGNED MICHAEL OWEN BOOKS • OXLADE-CHAMBERLAIN

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SADIO · BOBBY · MO

SMILE!

YOU'RE WATCHING THE BEST FRONT THREE IN THE BUSINESS

INSIDE: 12-PAGE SUPER CUP BINGE!

Contents



Last month's Ch6mpions of Europe book winners (Joel Matip was the correct answer) were: Stuart Thornton (Northampton), Chantelle Fletcher (Whiston), Russell Broomhall (Burntwood), John Cato (Liverpool), Patrick Hogan (Manchester) & Brian Griffiths (Wrexham).

Reach Sport
Editor David Cottrell Assistant Editor William Hughes Writer Chris McLoughlin Production Editor Michael McGuinness Design Colin Sumpter
Contributors Dave Ball, Ged Rea, Mark Johnson Photography Press Association, Getty Images, Mirrorpix, Liverpool Echo, John Powell, Andrew Powell, Nicholas Taylor © Liverpool Football Club & Athletic Grounds Ltd. Published by Reach Sport Managing Director Steve Hanrahan Commercial Director Will Beedles
Executive Art Editor Rick Cooke Executive Editor Paul Dove Marketing & Communications Manager Claire Brown
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BOBBY FIFTY-MINO

Roberto Firmino calmly slots home Liverpool's third goal of the game at Burnley and, in so doing, becomes the first Brazilian to reach 50 Premier League goals. The other Samba stars who are members of the top 10? Philippe Coutinho (41), Juninho (29), Willian and Gabriel Jesus (both 28), Oscar (21), Richarlison (20), Fernandinho (18), Gilberto Silva and Ramires (both 17).


MEE
6


UEFA
MEN'S PLAYER
OF THE YEAR
2018/19



HE'S OUR CENTRE HALF

Virgil van Dijk takes centre stage after claiming an awards double during the draw for the group stages of the UEFA Champions League. The big Dutchman was named UEFA Player of the Year and Defender of the Year in recognition of his outstanding displays as the Reds won their sixth European Cup. Also honoured were Frenkie De Jong (far left) who was named Midfielder of the Year, Lionel Messi, the Forward of the Year, and, of course, Van Dijk's Anfield team-mate Alisson Becker, who was crowned Goalkeeper of the Year.



RECORD BREAKERS

Liverpool's victory at Burnley last month also saw them set a new club record of 13 consecutive league victories. The run also started against Burnley - a 4-2 Anfield success on 10 March which saw Bobby Firmino and Sadio Mane each score twice. The Reds' previous record was set between April and October 1990 when, under Kenny Dalglish, they won 12 games in a row in the First Division.


FIRMINO
9
3



"Here to help the team"

The new man between the posts on encouragement from Alisson, the manager's Rocky impression, and that mega-welcome from the fans

Words: William Hughes


2019
Standard Chartered
Standard Chartered
ADRIAN
13
RESPECT

Eagle-eyed Liverpool fans will have noticed that Adrian's first reaction after helping the Reds win the UEFA Super Cup was an unusual one.

Having been catapulted into the first-team picture just days after his arrival on a free transfer, the Spaniard became an overnight hero when he saved Tammy Abraham's penalty to win the shoot-out and thus the trophy for the fourth time in the club's history.

Yet as his jubilant team-mates and manager Jürgen Klopp made a beeline for their new goalkeeper, the man himself turned back towards his goal to grab a towel which holds huge sentimental value to him.

Speaking to the magazine at Melwood the day after the team's return to England, Adrian explains: "After I put out my right foot to save that penalty it was an incredible moment, a hard feeling to describe. I remember running to get my towel which was by the left-hand post. It's really special to me and an emotive gift from my family."

A native of Seville, he says the story of the towel begins at his boyhood club Real Betis. His family are all avid fans of Los *Verdiblancos* (the Green-and-Whites) and season-ticket holders at the Estadio Benito Villamarin.

"There is a big football rivalry in Seville. In the city all the people are either Real Betis or Sevilla fans. I spent a long time playing for Betis from ten years old until 26 and I still have a ticket in my name. I am hoping Betis can make a good season in La Liga because that would also make my family happy.

"When I made my debut for Betis many years ago, the club started assigning one special towel every season for the players. Each season the towel includes things such as your name, a picture and a phrase."

When Adrian was released by West Ham this summer and found himself without a club, he contacted his former Betis goalkeeping coach Pedro Illanes who kept him in good shape while he was waiting to find a new club. Adrian also received a 2019/20 club towel.

"It has my full name on it, Adrian San Miguel del Castillo, a picture of the *Virgen de los Dolores* [Our Lady of Sorrows] and the phrase, which this season translates along the lines of 'Being humble is going to make you greater'.

"That is very significant for me this season because I was starting from nothing in July without a club. Then after just a few weeks I started playing for Liverpool and was winning the Super Cup.

"Therefore my first thought after I saved the penalty was to take my towel because it was like I was taking all my family and friends with me and they were there enjoying this moment. Then I fell to my knees and was able to celebrate with my team-mates, the boss and the rest of the staff."

YOU GET CONFIDENCE WITH TIME BUT THE SUPER CUP WIN GAVE ME A LOT BECAUSE WHEN YOU WIN YOU GET THAT POSITIVE FEELING, IT'S GREAT FOR EVERYONE

Adrian could hardly have foreseen his sudden call-to-action at Liverpool but the unfortunate calf-injury sustained by Alisson in the first half of the opening-night Premier League win against Norwich propelled him into the spotlight.

That game against the Canaries saw Adrian become the 749th player to represent Liverpool in a senior competitive fixture. It also meant that Super Cup clash against Chelsea in Istanbul five days later saw him become the first Liverpool player to make his full debut in a European final. His winner's medal was the first major honour of his professional career.

In the last issue of this magazine Jürgen Klopp referred to Divock Origi's Champions League exploits last season as "a story only football can write." Adrian's first fortnight at Liverpool is another chapter in that book.

The timing of Alisson's injury could hardly have been worse so far as Klopp was concerned. Under-23s goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher was recovering from pre-season surgery on a wrist injury, U18s keeper Vitezslav Jaros was recuperating from an elbow-ligament strain. And Adrian had not played a competitive fixture since January.

Credit then to Illanes, the man charged with keeping him in top condition during pre-season. "When I got into the Betis third team, Pedro was the manager. Then when I moved up to



Debut: Bobby welcomes Adrian to the action

European Cup/ UEFA Champions League
6
FA Cup
7
UEFA Cup
3
League Cup
8

the second team he was the goalkeeper coach.

"We had a great relationship and we are very good friends so I called him in the summer and said: 'I need you to keep me fit and make me ready for whichever club I'm going to sign for'. He said: 'Okay, let's train every day, whenever you want, any time'.

"Of course it's not easy for a player when you don't have a club and are not sure of the next step. Pedro was there for me in the tough times, not just when I'd saved an important penalty. His support has been very important to me."

More support came from the man whose position he assumed in the Liverpool line-up. "Alisson has been absolutely great. Of course it's very unlucky when a team-mate gets an injury, but we are football players and we know that we have that risk every time we play.

"We talked on the afternoon before the [Super Cup] game. He also sent me a message beforehand saying: 'All the best and good luck my friend'. I told him he deserved to be there as he'd helped the team win the Champions League.

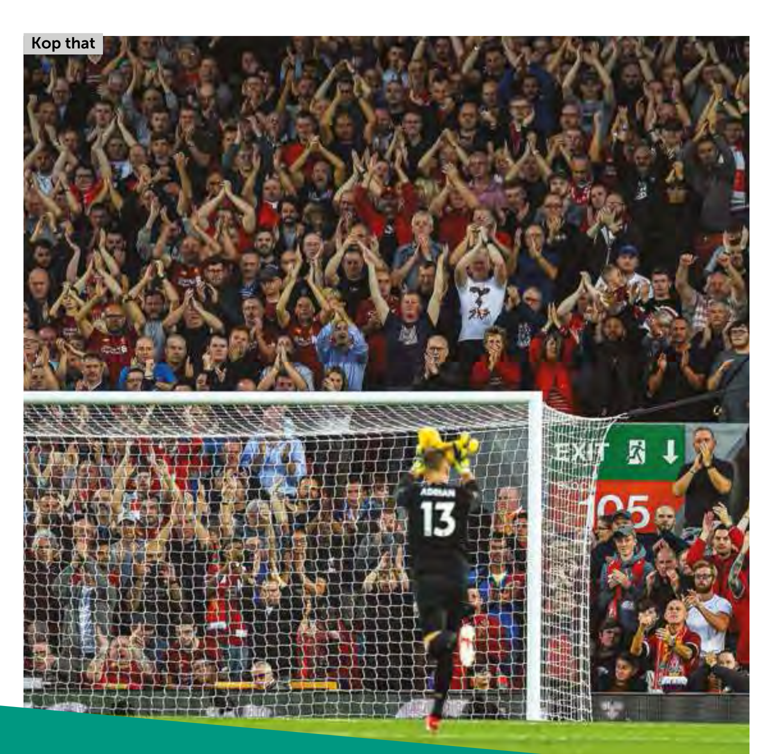
"He was not personally there but he was there with the heart. I just want to say thank you to him. The aim was to go out there and win that trophy and, finally, we got it."

The subsequent celebrations were memorable once again for the manager's sense of fun. Klopp had entertained fans after the Champions League triumph when he sang "Let's talk about six, baby!" to reporter and ex-player Jan-Aage Fjortoft. This time he shouted "Adriaaan! Like *Rocky*!"

The keeper was amused when he saw the clip afterwards. "That was really funny – I think even Sylvester Stallone would be happy with that impersonation!"

Another happy moment has been the warmth of the welcome he's received from his new team-mates and the supporters. "The reception I got from the Kop when I came on against Norwich is something that will stay with me for a long time. When you achieve things like we did [in the Super Cup] it makes you really happy for the people who have been supporting the club for so long.

"It can also make you feel more confident on the pitch. As a goalkeeper you need to give everyone confidence and try and give that solution to the team, so I will try to help them with my experience."

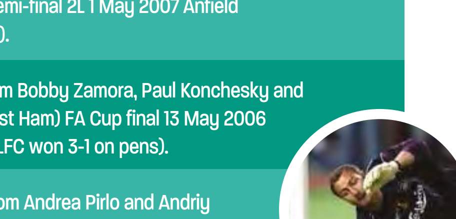


Kop that

SHOOTOUT SUPER SAVERS

Adrian saved from Tammy Abraham (Chelsea) Super Cup 14 Aug 2019 Besiktas Park (LFC won 5-4 on pens).

Simon Mignolet saved from Peter Crouch and Marc Muniesa (Stoke City) League Cup semi-final 2L 26 Jan 2016 Anfield (LFC won 6-5 on pens).



Adam Bogdan saved from Danny Grainger, Luke Joyce and Bastien Hery (Carlisle United) League Cup 3R 23 Sept 2015 Anfield (LFC won 3-2 on pens).

Simon Mignolet saved from Patrick Bamford (Middlesbrough) League Cup 3R 23 Sept 2014 Anfield (LFC won 14-13 on pens).

Pepe Reina saved from Arjen Robben and Geremi (Chelsea) Champions League semi-final 2L 1 May 2007 Anfield (LFC won 4-1 on pens).

Pepe Reina saved from Bobby Zamora, Paul Konchesky and Anton Ferdinand (West Ham) FA Cup final 13 May 2006 Millennium Stadium (LFC won 3-1 on pens).

Jerzy Dudek saved from Andrea Pirlo and Andriy Shevchenko (AC Milan) 25 May 2005 Ataturk Stadium (LFC won 3-2 on pens).

Jerzy Dudek saved from Fredi Kanoute (Tottenham) League Cup 5R 1 Dec 2004 White Hart Lane (LFC won 4-3 on pens).

Sander Westerveld saved from Martin Grainger and Andy Johnson (Birmingham City) League Cup final 25 Feb 2001 Millennium Stadium (LFC won 5-4 on pens).

David James saved from Steve McGavin (Birmingham City) FA Cup 3R replay 18 Jan 1995 Anfield (LFC won 2-0 on pens).

Bruce Grobbelaar saved from Vinnie Jones (Wimbledon) League Cup 4R replay 14 Dec 1993 Selhurst Park (LFC lost 3-4 on pens).

Bruce Grobbelaar saved from Warren Neill (Portsmouth) FA Cup semi-final 13 April 1992 Villa Park (LFC won 3-1 on pens).

He's settled quickly into the goalkeepers union at Melwood. "We have a very good group and they have helped me feel welcome. All the goalies are great – they are all magnificent people with John [Achterberg], the goalkeeper coach, his assistant Jack [Robinson] and all the guys including the younger keepers.

"We need to feel that good atmosphere when we are training because we spend a long time together, often training apart from the rest of the team. So we have many situations where we are training alone together and I think having this spirit is a positive thing. We are trying to push each other all the time."

Adrian had only trained for three days before making his bow against Norwich and admits it will take a little while longer for him to become fully integrated into the Liverpool line-up.

"You get the confidence with time. The Super Cup gave me a lot of confidence because when you win you get that positive feeling, so it's great for everyone.

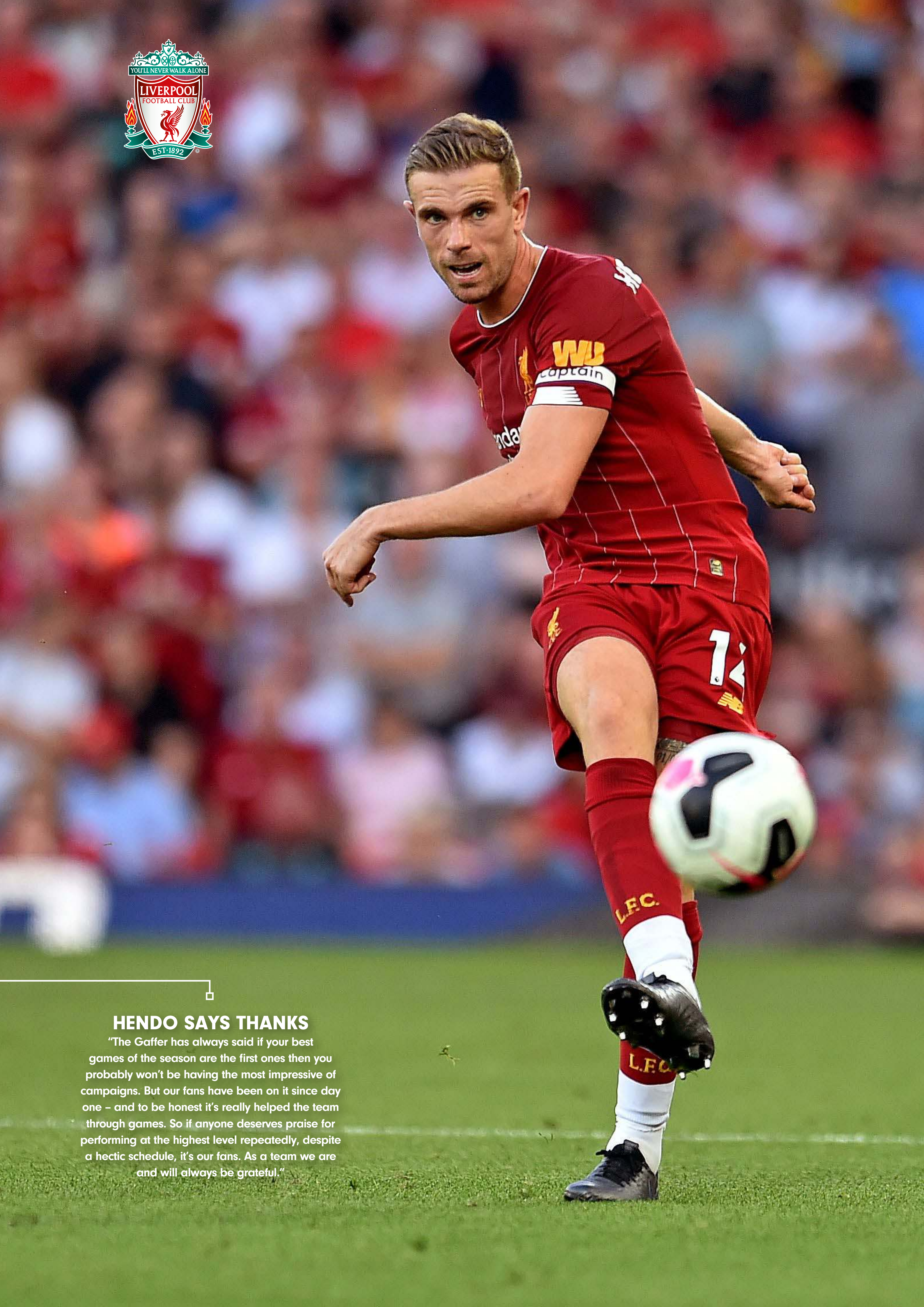
"Hopefully I can keep taking steps forwards, gain more confidence and keep helping the team."


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WE ARE LIVERPOOL.
THIS MEANS MORE.



SIXES AND SEVENS

He's still over a century of games away from catching all-time record holder Gareth Barry, but James Milner is now sixth on the list of most Premier League appearances. Milly was joint seventh alongside ex-Red Emile Heskey going into the 2019/20 season, but went into the international break on 519 PL appearances - 16 behind fifth-placed Gary Speed.



HENDO SAYS THANKS

"The Gaffer has always said if your best games of the season are the first ones then you probably won't be having the most impressive of campaigns. But our fans have been on it since day one – and to be honest it's really helped the team through games. So if anyone deserves praise for performing at the highest level repeatedly, despite a hectic schedule, it's our fans. As a team we are and will always be grateful."

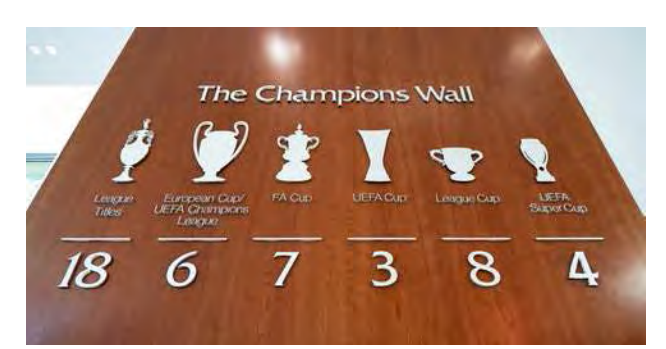
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THE WALK OF CHAMPIONS.
Achievement runs through our veins. It's part of our DNA. In our inaugural season of 1892-93 Liverpool Football Club won the Lancashire League. Just eight years later,
Reds captain Alex Raisbeck was holding aloft the first of our 18 League titles. That set the benchmark.
A walk past our honours board will bear witness to this: 42 major titles to date. Add to this three UEFA Super Cups, 15 FA Charity Shields, numerous Reserve League and FA Youth Cups, plus two FA Women's Super League titles.
As a club we're immensely proud of every honour received. Meaning so much more to us, each has underwritten an important chapter in our story so far. **And in doing so, has created an exciting prelude to the next.**
League Titles
18
European Cup/ UEFA Champions League
6
FA Cup
7
UEFA Cup
3
League Cup
8


The Champions Wall
League Titles
European Cup/ UEFA Champions League
FA Cup
UEFA Cup
League Cup
UEFA Super Cup
18
6
7
3
8
4


THE CHAMPIONS WALL
"The trophies we won last season are gone. In the past. We start again. We have to defend our title." Joe Fagan
Football League
European Cup/Champions League
FA Cup
League Cup
UEFA Cup
European Super Cup


Liverpool FC



BACK ON OUR PERCH

Liverpool's Super Cup victory not only secured a second piece of silverware in the calendar year 2019, it also put the Reds back on top as English football's most successful club with 46 major honours...

Excluding the FA Community Shield (which was previously shared when the showcase match was drawn rather than having an outright winner) and minor trophies such as the now-defunct Full Members' Cup and UEFA Intertoto Cup, a total of eleven English football clubs have won 10 major honours or more.

Liverpool led the table for decades, the Liver Bird perched happily above all others. But in 2017 Manchester United's League Cup and Europa League double edged our greatest rivals one trophy ahead. Not for long.

In June 2019 Jürgen Klopp's side climbed level in Madrid with a glorious sixth European Cup, and when Adrian saved Tammy Abraham's penalty in the UEFA Super Cup final in Istanbul, the Liver Bird rose highest once again.



	LG	FAC	LC	CL	EL	ECWC	SC	CWC	IC	Total
Liverpool	**18**	**7**	**8**	**6**	**3**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**46**
Manchester United	20	12	5	3	1	1	1	1	1	45
Arsenal	13	13	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	30
Chelsea	6	8	5	1	2	2	1	0	0	25
Aston Villa	7	7	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	21
Manchester City	6	6	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	19
Tottenham Hotspur	2	8	4	0	2	1	0	0	0	17
Everton	9	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	15
Newcastle United	4	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11
Nottingham Forest	1	2	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	10
Blackburn Rovers	3	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	10

Key: LG: League title; FAC: FA Cup; LC: League Cup; CL: Champions League/European Cup; EL: Europa League/UEFA Cup/Inter-Citied Fairs Cup; ECWC: European Cup Winners' Cup; SC: UEFA Super Cup; CWC: Club World Cup; IC: Intercontinental Cup.

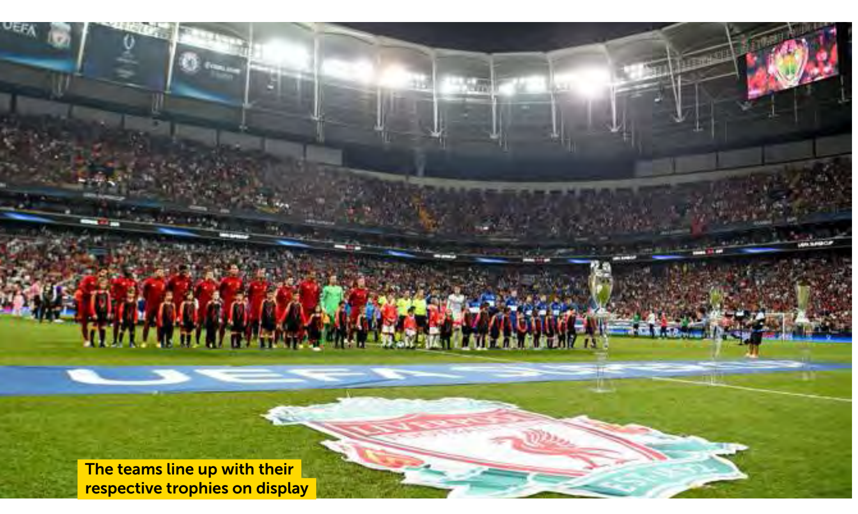


SUPER REDS OF ISTANBUL



A second major trophy in less than three months? We'll take that. The best shots from the showcase UEFA occasion →




The teams line up with their respective trophies on display



Mo mesmerising the ball


Milner v Kante



The captain with referee Stephanie Frappart


Bobby sends Kepa the wrong way


Fabinho, who had cramp, buries his penalty into the bottom-left corner


Divock's spot-kick gets past Kepa's hands


Trent's low effort finds the net

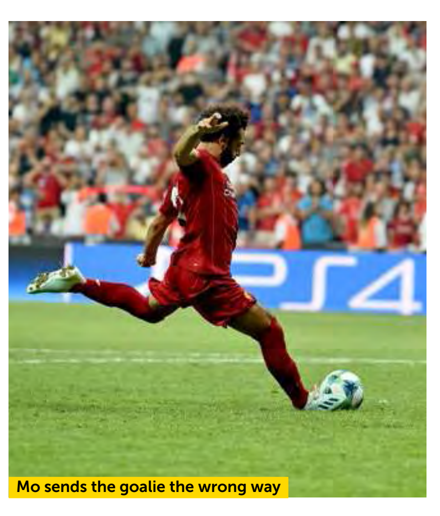
Mane equalises on 48 minutes...



Andy Robbo on his way



...then puts us 2-1 up on 95 minutes



Mo sends the goalie the wrong way



Adrian saves with his trailing leg from Abraham's pen



Yeeeeeeessssssssssss!!!



Ali Turganbekov, a disabled youngster from Kazakhstan, presents the trophy to Jordan Henderson



It's ours!



The goalscoring hero

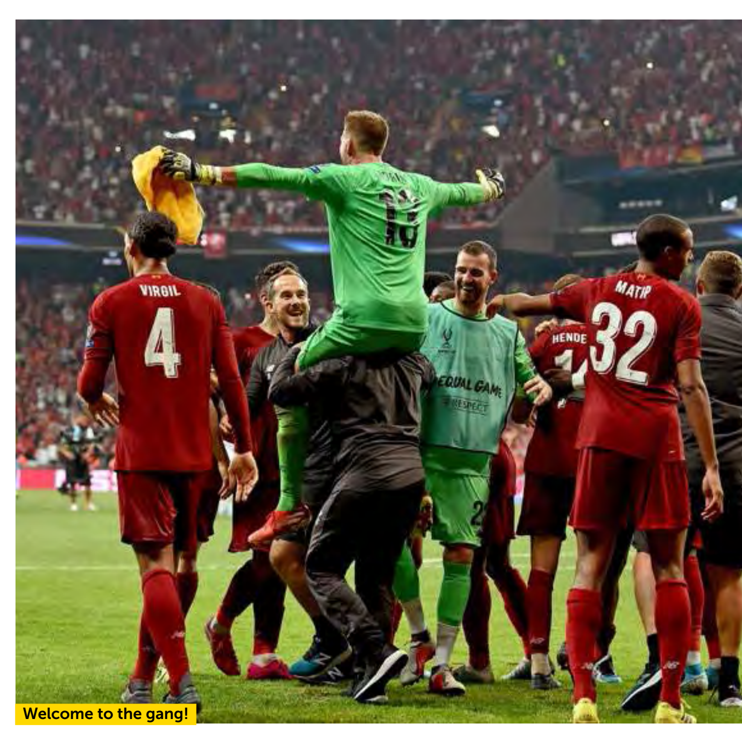


The pen-saving king





Pure joy



Welcome to the gang!



Big Virg and Little Mo



One for the fans



You'll Never Walk Alone

What a team

Daily Telegraph

Awesome Adrian



Washout Archer forced to wait for Test debut as rain wipes out first day

Sport

The Daily Telegraph

Awesome Adrian

Adrian the hero as Liverpool edge out Chelsea in shootout to claim Uefa Super Cup victory

"Winning is a habit and Liverpool have their second European trophy in a few short months and while it felt a little mad that extra-time was played, that players were dropping to the turf with cramp and others folded in exhaustion in 24 degree heat beyond midnight there was simply no relenting; no inch given. It was a quarter to one in the morning – Istanbul is two hours ahead of the UK – when Chelsea substitute Tammy Abraham stepped up to take the 10th spot-kick in the shoot with all the previous nine having been converted. Adrian saved with his legs and the celebrations exploded, compounded by the fact that nine-tenths, if not more, of the stadium was decked in red. Such is Liverpool's global reach."

Jason Burt

The Times

Liverpool triumph on penalties

Adrian adds name to list of Liverpool's Istanbul heroes

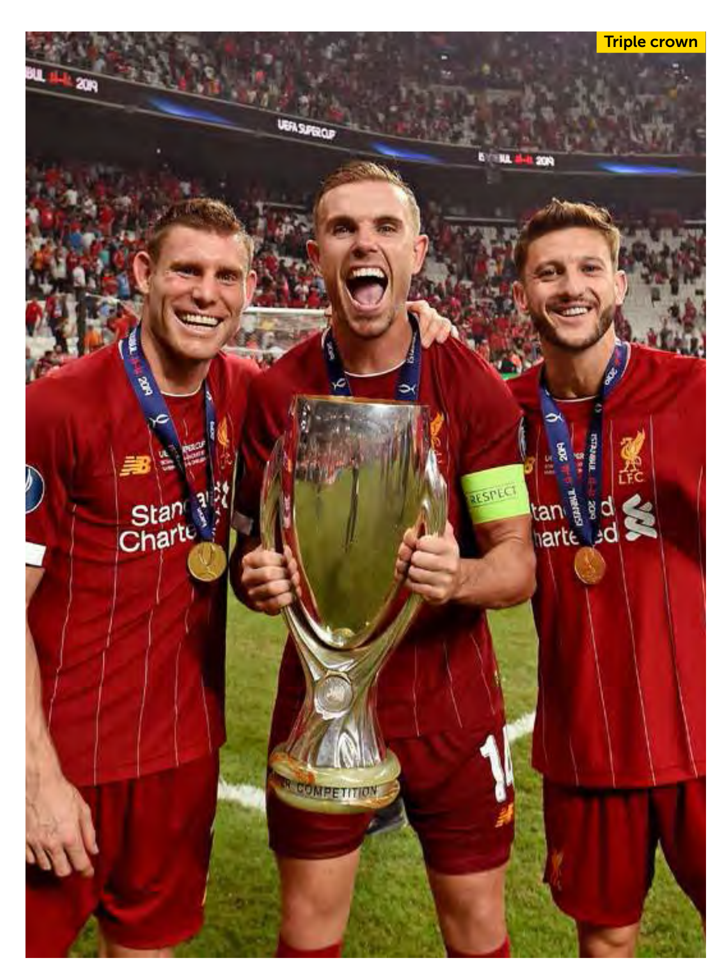
"This mattered. It mattered to Jürgen Klopp, who set off at speed towards Adrian. Liverpool will have to update the Champions Wall at their Melwood training ground again. Their love affair with Istanbul and European finals and shoot-outs intensified last night. It was not the Champions League climax, as in 2005, it was in a different stadium, but it was important. It mattered."

Henry Winter



Adrian adds name to list of Liverpool's Istanbul heroes

How they rated in Super Cup



Triple crown



Double delight

Liverpool Echo

Adrian's Reds' Super Star

Another Istanbul Shoot-out success



ECHO
liverpoolecho.co.uk/sport
SPORT
LIVERPOOL 2 CHELSEA 2
AET 5-4 ON PENALTIES
EVERTON FC
Silva on 'unbelievable' prices Blues were quoted for players, and why Sigi will stay a club record breaker
/See Pages 58-59
Adrian's Reds' Super STAR
STAND-IN KEEPER IS SPOT-KICK HERO AS REDS LAND MORE SILVERWARE IN ISTANBU
Report, Reaction and Analysis /See Pages 60-

"After seven trophy-less years for the Reds, they have now added two in less than three months. This particular Turkish triumph will never have the enduring allure of May 25, 2005 but, when Istanbul is mentioned in years to come, the European champions will have another trophy-laden chapter to toast."

Paul Gorst

Daily Mirror

Superman

Reds Bul Dog Spirit



Mirror Sport
QPR DEMAND UEFA ACT AFTER U-18s FORCED OFF BY RACIST ABUSE
LINDELOF LANDS £54M DEAL TO PARTNER HARRY
» SUPER CUP LIVERPOOL 2 CHELSEA 2
UPERMAN
Klopp hails hero keeper as his Rocky after Adrian's masterclass hands Liverpool the Super Cup in a thriller

"Another fightback, more extra-time and an unlikely hero in the penalty shoot-out. The script was written in Liverpool's Champions League final in Istanbul in 2005 and then repeated on another remarkable night."

John Cross

Spanish newspaper Marca went with the headline:

'ADRIAN, A NEW HERO FOR LIVERPOOL'



GUÍAMARCA DE LA LIGA 2019-2020 YA A LA VENTA
MARCA
2 2
ADRIÁN
EL NUEVO HÉROE DEL LIVERPOOL
VINICIUS NO SE TOCA

AS went with:

'ADRIAN, FROM UNEMPLOYMENT TO SUPER CUP WIN'



AS se renueva • Los mejores directos, en alianza con Twitt
as.com
as
STÉPHANIE FRAPPART TAMBIÉN FUE SÚPER
2 2
ADRIÁN
DEL PARO A LA GLORIA



BACK ON THE BOSPORUS



All aboard the latest Liverpool love-in with Istanbul! Reds fan **Mark Johnson** catches the Super Cup ferry

On Super Cup final day, five hundred Kopites gathered on the banks of the Bosphorus eagerly anticipating what lay ahead. We boarded the chartered cruise boat, the *Incisu* – which translates as 'Pearl' – and our Istanbul odyssey began, sailing from Kabatas Pier which is a stone's throw from the city's tramline and a five-minute walk from Besiktas Park Stadium.

The arena is where Liverpool's UEFA Super Cup match against Chelsea would be played later on that night. Spirits among the Reds were sky-high and the excitement was building fast. There was a cup to be won and it would be disappointing to travel this far without seeing Jordan Henderson lift it.

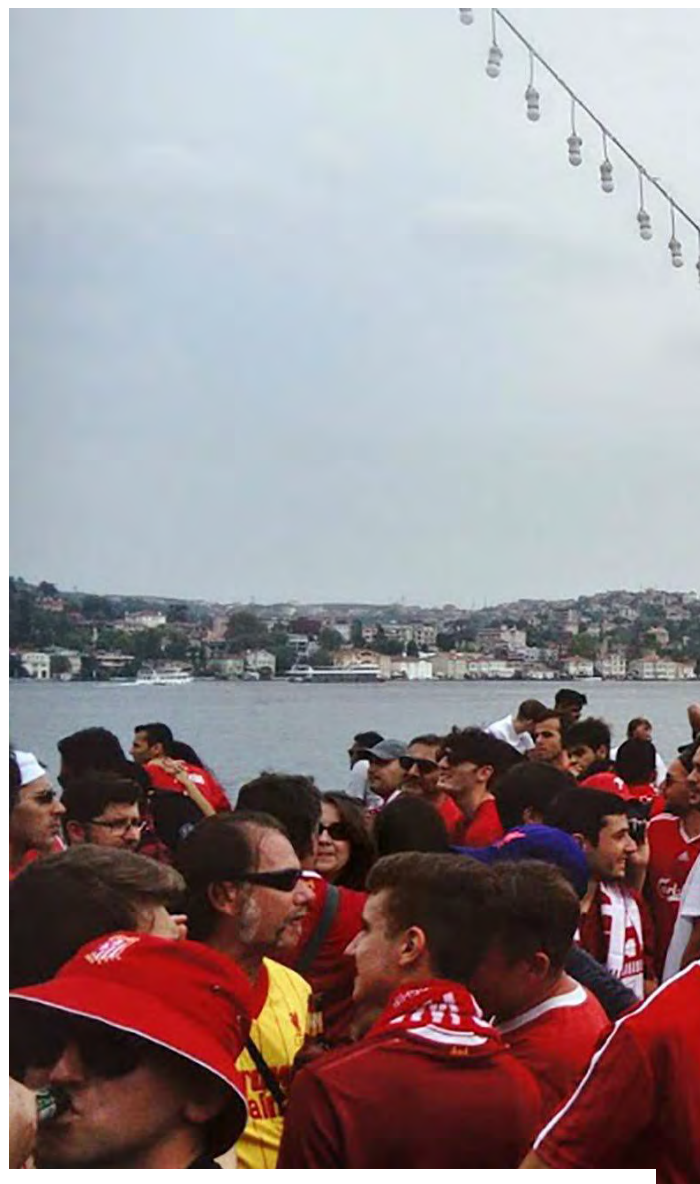
The locals welcomed us with open arms. They clearly have an affection for Liverpool and the feeling is mutual.

The four-hour boat trip was organised by the Official Liverpool Supporters Club Turkey and the travelling Kop shared its passion for all things Red with supporters from across the Middle East. August is the hottest month of the year in Turkey so match-shirts, T-shirts and shorts were worn by the Reds gliding under the sun.

As we powered upriver, there was a pleasant gentle breeze which helped to assuage the sweltering heat. Views of the Istanbul metropolis were pleasing on the eye and we passed architecturally-magnificent palaces, mansions and mosques.



Reds from all over the world converged upon Istanbul



At the bar a free Efes or soft drink was given to every fan on production of their ticket and it wasn't long before Liverpool songs started booming. Music was also played, among the hits Dua Lipa's *One Kiss*. Two energetic Turkish belly dancers, in richly-decorated costumes, shimmied their way onto the deck and encouraged fans to join in the dancing before they finished their enchanting act.

Adding to the afternoon's drama was a successful marriage proposal, which earned a hearty round of applause.

Halfway through the journey came the main act. We were in for a treat as the superlative Jamie Webster was due to perform an array of our favourite songs. And he didn't disappoint.

From the top deck the highlights came thick and fast. The Bobby Firmino, Virgil van Dijk and Mo Salah Egyptian King tribute songs were spectacular and *Allez! Allez! Alllez!* was awesome. We Won it Five Times was special, given that we were in the city where we did just that, prompting vivid recollections of that night 14 years ago.

Passengers on passing boats waved at the sea of red and fog horns sounded in appreciation.

We approached Maiden's Tower and *You'll Never Walk Alone* was sang with pride. The golden Turkish sun shimmered on the water and we headed back to Kabatas.

After all this merriment the sailing Kop was in the mood for the big game now. Fans refuelled at restaurants and strolled through the Besiktas district to the impressive ground, which inside looked three-quarters red such is Liverpool's following in the region.

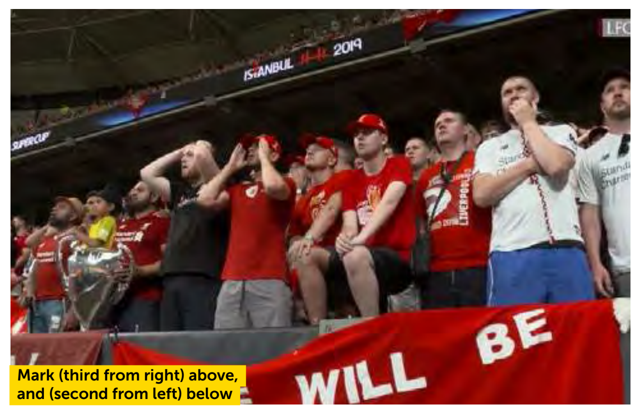
Liverpool began brightly, but they weren't totally plugged-in as the half progressed and it was disappointing to be one-nil down at the break. A Sadio Mane goal got us back on track, but still Chelsea gave us a game and despite another Mane strike putting us ahead they levelled by converting a suspect penalty.

There'd been a sense of *deja vu* when, just like in 2005 at Istanbul's Ataturk Stadium, it went to extra-time under a full moon. That feeling was experienced again when it went to penalties. Perhaps goalkeeper Adrian would have the Midas touch this time?

Indeed, the Reds back-up shot stopper proved to be this game's equivalent to Jerzy Dudek by saving Tammy Abraham's spot-kick. Adrian's crucial foot-save secured Liverpool's fourth Super Cup. Cue a frenzy of joy and a wonderful rendition of *YNWA*.

Back at Taksim Square in the early hours of the morning it was time to bid farewell to Istanbul. For now. Ataturk Olympic Stadium is the 2020 Champions League final venue.

Hopefully we're back next May to experience another magical odyssey and make it number seven.



Mark (third from right) above, and (second from left) below



If there are better ways to spend Super Cup day, we'd need evidence







WE THREE KINGS

Individually awesome, collectively unstoppable – why Liverpool's tripartite strike-force is the envy of the footballing world





BOBBY:

UNBELIEVABLY VALUABLE

Roberto Firmino hardly stopped after last June's Champions League triumph, appearing for Brazil in the Copa America tournament, and like club team-mate Mo Salah playing less than 90 minutes in pre-season friendlies.

But from the start against Manchester City in the FA Community Shield at Wembley he looked sharp, and although he didn't score in the Premier League opener against Norwich City at Anfield he was instrumental in Liverpool's blistering first-half performance that night.

On Radio 5 Live ex-Reds defender Stephen Warnock called him "superb – he looks back to his best, fit and hungry.

"I think everything that's good about Liverpool comes from him. When the ball goes up to him, it sticks. He sees things and Liverpool can make runs off him. That's where their game-plan comes from."

Having provided two assists for Sadio Mane's second goal in the UEFA Super Cup win over Chelsea, the second a cute cutback in extra-time, the Brazilian scored his first goal of 2018/19 in the subsequent Premier League fixture at Southampton.

What a finish it was, Mane having returned the compliment by pouncing on a Saints defender's hesitation to square to Bobby to dance across the box then fire home.





Around this time last year Jürgen Klopp said, simply: ""He's doing the job – that makes him so unbelievably valuable for us." The Reds boss added that with Firmino "it's about how you see it: the small things he does, working so hard. He's here, he's there. He scores goals but he opens 5,000 gaps for everybody."

Another former Liverpool player, Gary Gillespie, summed it up like this in his column for the LFC matchday programme: "He's always looking to create something, unlike other players who do the simple and easier pass. So there's a lot of weight on his shoulders, in terms of that transition from defence to attack. But even when it's not quite clicking for him, he never gives up, he's never not there to have the ball, and it's a great attribute to have...

"We place such high importance on him because when he plays well, Liverpool play well. He's such a key part of the team [and] we don't have any other player of his ilk to replace him."

MO: MAKING THE DIFFERENCE





"A lot of times in my life I had sensational players [but] not world-class players," said Jürgen Klopp to the club's official website just recently. "Now, thank God, I have them and they make the difference.

"Sadio Mane, Bobby Firmino, Mo Salah – these guys in the last situation are really outstanding. They were a constant threat [against Southampton], however tired they are. That's brilliant and, of course, made the difference. We don't have to talk about that."

Forgive us, boss, if we do. Up to and including that 2-1 win at St Mary's, two of the Liverpool front-three were the Premier League's most prolific appearance-makers since the start of last season, in all competitions. Mane had played 53 times amounting to 4,515 minutes, yielding 29 goals. Mo's stats: 56 appearances, 4,716 minutes, 28 goals. Clearly they're happiest on the pitch, invariably in each other's company, in this dynamic, effervescent Klopp team.

Goalkeeping newcomer Adrian can already feel the rapport between the front-three: "I played against them many times, so now I play with them and I'm enjoying how they play from behind.

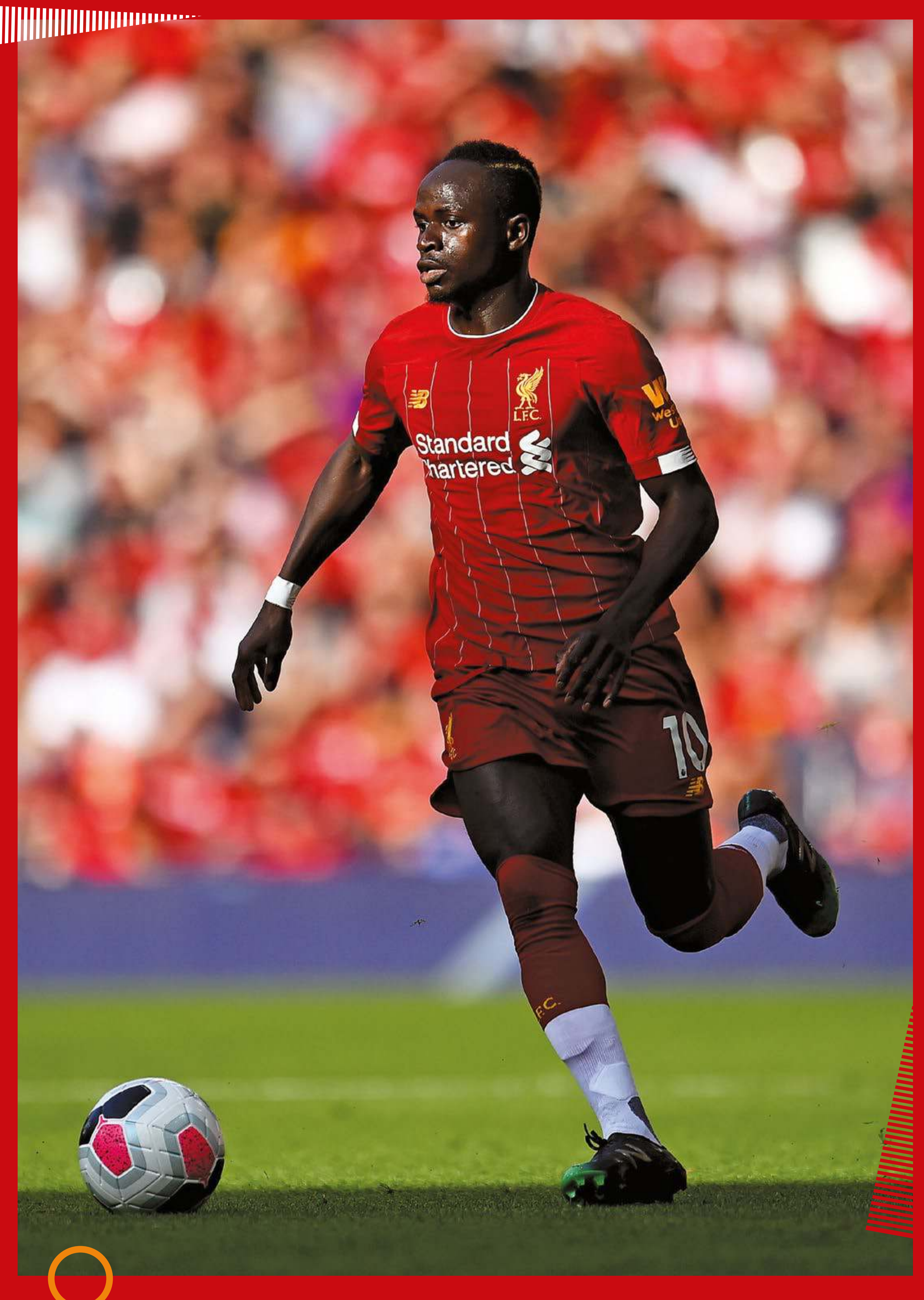
"I'm really happy for them because they are doing really well, they have a great connection between them. They are good players individually, but they are good friends in the dressing-room also and you can see that feeling on the pitch."

Mo got off the mark this season with a typically clinical strike against Norwich (assisted by Bobby), meaning he'd scored in Liverpool's first Premier League match in each of the last three seasons. Then came two at home to Arsenal, the second a belter.

True to the Klopp mantra, he clearly embraces the pressure of being the Premier League's premier goalscorer. "If you play for a club like Liverpool there's always big expectation [that] you have to win something. Even if it's not from yourselves, it's from the people because they want to see the club winning something.

"The manager says: keep working hard, if you want to win another trophy you have to work harder than last season and you have to really be humble. The Champions League final [from last season] is over, so forget it. Fight for the new trophies again this season."


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10

MANÉ: MORE THAN A GOALSCORER

The first African player to score in the Super Cup since Frederic Kanoute in 2006. The first player to score in his first Premier League start of a campaign in four back-to-back seasons since Mark Viduka from 2002 to 2006. The first Liverpool to reach 20 goals in all competitions in the calendar year of 2019.

The one and only Sadio Mane.

Former Kop star Gary Gillespie again: "Last season I'd say he was the least talked-about of the front-three, but he was arguably our player of the season for his goals and the work he did defensively as well as in attack.

"If there's one trait he has that maybe the other two don't, it's going past people. I know Mo can too, but he's more of a fox in the box and Bobby has that fantastic football intelligence. I like Mane when he gets on that half-turn, lets the ball run through him and goes at defenders."

Danny Murphy, another ex-Red, continues the theme: "Mane is becoming more than just a goalscorer. He's got that great pace to run in behind, as we know, which stretches teams and helps Liverpool play on the counter at times. In the final third [of the pitch] it makes such a difference to have top quality there.

"People don't necessarily think of Mane being a provider but his assists are good and often on his 'weaker' left foot, and his closing-down has always been good. He's tenacious, he gets on the front foot, he works hard at that aspect of his game. Keeping him fit is a big bonus for Liverpool."

Most players need a spell of R&R after a busy summer. Mane just seems to take it all in his stride. He had 16 days 'off' between the end of his Africa Cup of Nations adventure with Senegal and his return to the Reds first-team fold after the FA Community Shield, the boss saying, "He will be in a good shape, I think he will be fine but we have to see."

Seventy-four minutes into the Norwich game at Anfield he came on for Divock Origi to rapturous applause. Five days later in Istanbul he scored twice against Chelsea to help the Reds win the Super Cup. Sixty hours on and he was smashing home Liverpool's opener at Southampton before setting up Bobby for the second.

BBC pundit Garth Crooks had Mane in his team of the week, noting that "he looked sharper and fitter than anyone else on the field." That's why the Liverpool no10 is world-class.





"This team is going places"



Midfielder **Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain** delighted Liverpudlians when he penned a new long-term deal and here's what he told LFCTV...

Congratulations on signing a new deal with the club – how does it feel to have it done?
I'm really, really excited. It's been in the pipeline for a little while, so it's nice to finally get it done and extend my time here, which I am really looking forward to.

I feel like I missed out on a year but it's exciting for me to be able to sign. It's something that I feel is an opportunity to give that year back and make up for lost time – and hopefully put in some good performances.




15
L.F.C.
AXA

Does it feel like the ideal time to re-sign with the club?
Yeah, it is obviously a really good moment for the boys, for us as a team. Winning the Champions League was massive of course and I think it is a team going places. Everyone is settled here and everyone has the same vision. The boys are buying into what we're doing and it's really nice to be a part of that.

For any player, to come and join us or extend their time here, they would be absolutely over-the-moon at this moment in time. To be able to extend any contract with a club like this is dream stuff.

You've got to count your blessings every time you get an opportunity like this – you don't get the chance to play for Liverpool Football Club every day. I'm really excited to be able to extend my time here.

A lot of people feel these are exciting times for the club – is that an opinion the players share?
Definitely. I think it is obvious to see the team is progressing. Even when we're not playing well, we still manage to grind out results and that's a positive thing.

In times when we are playing well, it speaks for itself: we thrive and have the ability to steamroll teams. From the outside, it would look like a really good time to sign – and I can speak even more from the inside about how good the group of lads is.

It is a really, really good group of players, not only in terms of talent but characters and how much everyone respects each other. The manager and the coaches, the backroom staff, they're all a massive part of it. The whole set-up, the structure, is perfect at the moment.

Last year was the first sign of that going in the right direction with the Champions League. Now in a weird way it is almost like it didn't happen, but I think that's credit to everyone around the building – everyone is hungry for what's next.

That's the right attitude to have to go on and be more successful. That's the plan, hopefully we can follow it through and win some more things.

How do you believe you've changed from the guy who walked through the doors a couple of years ago here at Melwood?
I would say I feel a lot more senior and experienced, a bit more of an older head. I am happy to take more responsibility on my shoulders both on and off the pitch.

You go through stages, especially in our careers. It is a bit of a funny stage in your life when you're 18 or 19



I WOULD SAY I FEEL A LOT MORE SENIOR AND EXPERIENCED, A BIT MORE OF AN OLDER HEAD. I AM HAPPY TO TAKE MORE RESPONSIBILITY ON MY SHOULDERS BOTH ON AND OFF THE PITCH



Holding off N'Golo Kante in the UEFA Super Cup

Working hard at Melwood

but still expected to be a man and help carry the hopes of a club and a lot of fans and stuff like this. You've got boys in and around you who are older and have been doing it for longer, so some of them step up and take that responsibility to be the leader – and you kind of follow and learn off them.

Now, with people like Rhian coming in, even Trent because he's only 20 still, you have the realisation that those boys may now look to me and the lads in and around my sort of years and experience, for advice and help. That's where I feel more responsibility.

Playing for a club like this, I feel a lot more responsible to carry the values of the club and what it means to be a Liverpool player. That has probably been the biggest change.

Also, working with the manager who gives me a lot of confidence and belief, which helps me go and really believe I can be the guy that goes onto the pitch and makes the difference. That comes naturally to some people, but there were points in my career where I was feeling that I could be that guy, and there were definitely times when I was the guy who just wanted to work hard to try to help but 'they [the other players] are the superstars – give them the ball'.

It's a maturing process, finding your feet and what your roles and responsibilities are. That's been a big thing for me that's changed since being here. Even though I have missed a lot of football, I still think I've come on in that aspect.

In terms of your road back to fitness, how significant was it for you to have been on the bench for the Champions League final?

That was really nice. I was working towards being back probably sooner, but as rehab goes, they never really go exactly to plan, especially the longer ones. You always have things that crop up. It turned out that I was just back in time for the Huddersfield game and then available for the final, so it was really nice to be a part of it.

It's hard to put into words how it feels when you can't actually contribute on the pitch and you're watching from the outside. It's a strange feeling but you're still part of the team and want the best for everyone and want to help where you can. So, just something little like being on the bench and actually putting on the kit and being in the warm-up and around the boys right before they play, giving them a few words of encouragement, makes a massive difference.



At the same time, I was warming up, there, ready just in case I needed to come on. Then when you win, you feel so much more a part of it when you can strip off and be in the kit with the lads and down there on the touchline. It was a brilliant night and one that I'll never forget.

The parade in a way was even better for me. I enjoyed that massively. Just seeing so many people in the streets all there for one thing was mindblowing.

Did that experience maybe change your perception of Liverpool?

I heard about it from Istanbul and what it was going to be like if we won, but seeing it first-hand is something you can't really grasp with just hearing the stories. It was unbelievable.

When we came down onto The Strand, that was something I never thought I'd see in football. I couldn't speak for a good week after that [with] the amount of shouting and singing we did. To share those sort of moments with your mates and the guys that you've worked so hard with or seen work so hard for something, that's special.

They're the moments that you live for. To see how much it meant to so many people and they're all there to show their appreciation – it's what you do it for. It doesn't come around so often, so you have to soak those moments in.

But the main thing for us is that we give back more of those moments to the fans because they deserve them. The amount of support they give and the passion they show, it's incredible. I'm really glad I could be part of that history, with a team that could change and move so many people's lives.

What would you say to the fans who are excited about your new contract?

First of all, I'd say thank you very much for all the support through a long comeback, probably longer than they would've liked and longer than I would've liked. I can't thank them enough for that.

I can then promise them that I'll give them absolutely everything moving forward. There might be times where I have bad games and good games and moments where it's not so good, but I'll always work through those moments and give my everything to correct them and keep pushing this team forward.

I hope that I can do some special things like I did before I got injured and, most of all, be a part of this group of players that go on to hopefully win more things. I'm really excited to see what the future holds for us all.

• Watch the full interview on LFCTV GO. A free month's trial is currently available.

WHEN WE CAME DOWN ONTO THE STRAND, THAT WAS SOMETHING I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE IN FOOTBALL. I COULDN'T SPEAK FOR A GOOD WEEK AFTER THAT [WITH] THE AMOUNT OF SHOUTING AND SINGING WE DID





A SONG FOR THE OX?

Jürgen Klopp is thrilled to see Alex commit his future to the club and has challenged the Kop to come up with a song for our no15.

The boss says: "When I heard Ox had signed his new contract with us, I am sure my emotions were the same as every Liverpool fan hearing the news – absolutely delighted. This is because an absolutely outstanding player and person has shown his belief and commitment to our project here and it's a deal I think makes sense on both sides.

"Ox has said himself it feels to him like he's been here a lot longer than he actually has and that is something I would agree with. That's down to his personality around the place at Melwood. I have said in the past, one of the best things about him is what an outstanding human being he is, one of the nicest guys you will meet. Of course, he is also an outstandingly talented footballer too.

"We all know Alex's story since he came to the club, and yes there have been disappointments as well as highs, but what has impressed me and everyone is his attitude to dealing with setbacks and his character. That's why none of us were ever in any doubt about him fighting his way back in the way he did.

"Now he is fit and he can kick on and show once again just how good he is. But there is still a lot of hard work on that road. There will be times things don't go the way he'd want. There are times he will need to be patient, times he will be angry in the right way, but I am convinced everything will be fine.

"And who knows, maybe this is the season we hear the Kop sing an Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain song? I can tell you it would mean a lot to me and the boys to hear that – let alone him!"



In his Anfield home


UEFA
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
DEFENDER
OF THE SEASON



OUR MEN IN MONACO

VIRGIL and **ALISSON** pick up three honours between them as the Reds find out who'll be joining them in Group E of this season's UEFA Champions League

Words: Chris McLoughlin



Virgil van Dijk and Alisson Becker lifted a treble of trophies at UEFA's Champions League Group Stage draw in glittering Monaco.

Alisson was named as UEFA Champions League Goalkeeper of the Year for his performances in the Reds' 2019 success having kept the most clean-sheets (6) in the competition and made a record eight saves in the final victory against Spurs. The Brazilian received 334 points in UEFA's voting system – the other nine goalkeepers in contention received 332 points between them.

"I just want to say thank you to my team-mates and to the people who work with me: the goalkeeping coaches, also from Liverpool," he said. "They helped me a lot this season to improve on my last season that I had at Roma. Now, I'm just looking forward to coming back quickly to have another great season."

While the Liverpool goalkeeper was collecting that award, his Anfield team-mate Van Dijk was doing the double. Not only was he named as UEFA Champions League Defender of the Season – beating Matthijs de Ligt into second and Reds full-backs Trent Alexander-Arnold and Andy Robertson into third and fourth respectively – Virgil also landed the prestigious UEFA Men's Player of the Year Award.

Shortlisted in the top three alongside previous winners Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, he landed the honour by almost 100 points, picking up a voting tally of 305 with Messi getting 207 and Ronaldo 74. Sadio Mane and Mo Salah completed the top five.

The jury comprised of the 80 coaches from clubs that participated in the group stages of the 2018/19 UEFA Champions League (32) and UEFA Europa League (48), along with 55 journalists selected by the European Sports Media (ESM) group, one from each of UEFA's member associations.

Virgil was understandably delighted to receive such recognition. "It's been a great year and obviously, to get recognition for what we did last year is stunning," he said after receiving the award. "It's down to everyone at Liverpool, everyone that is helping me along the way as well so it's great.

"It has been a long road but that's part of my journey, it's part of who I am. I needed it like this, I'm not a player who was 18-years-old and had that rise straightaway. I had to work hard for every step of the way – that's part of me and I'm happy about that. I'm very proud to get this trophy."

Since the award was inaugurated in 2010/11, Virgil is the first Liverpool player, the first defender and the first Dutchman to be UEFA Men's Player of the Year, joining Messi (2011 and 2015), Andres Iniesta (2012), Franck Ribery (2013), Ronaldo (2014, 2016, 2017) and Luka Modric (2018).

Also voted 2019 PFA Player's Player of the Year, Virgil is now odds-on with bookmakers to win the Ballon d'Or. But first-and-foremost the 28-year-old is looking forward to Liverpool's return to the Champions League in Group E alongside Napoli, Salzburg and Genk.

"I think if your team is in the Champions League you're looking forward to every bit of it, because you want to know who you're going to face. You want to think ahead about what's coming.

"Napoli is an outstanding team, we obviously got beaten by them in the pre-season. Obviously, pre-season doesn't say too much but we know how good they are. They have a fantastic squad with fantastic players and overall, in the Champions League, anything can happen."

NAPOLI

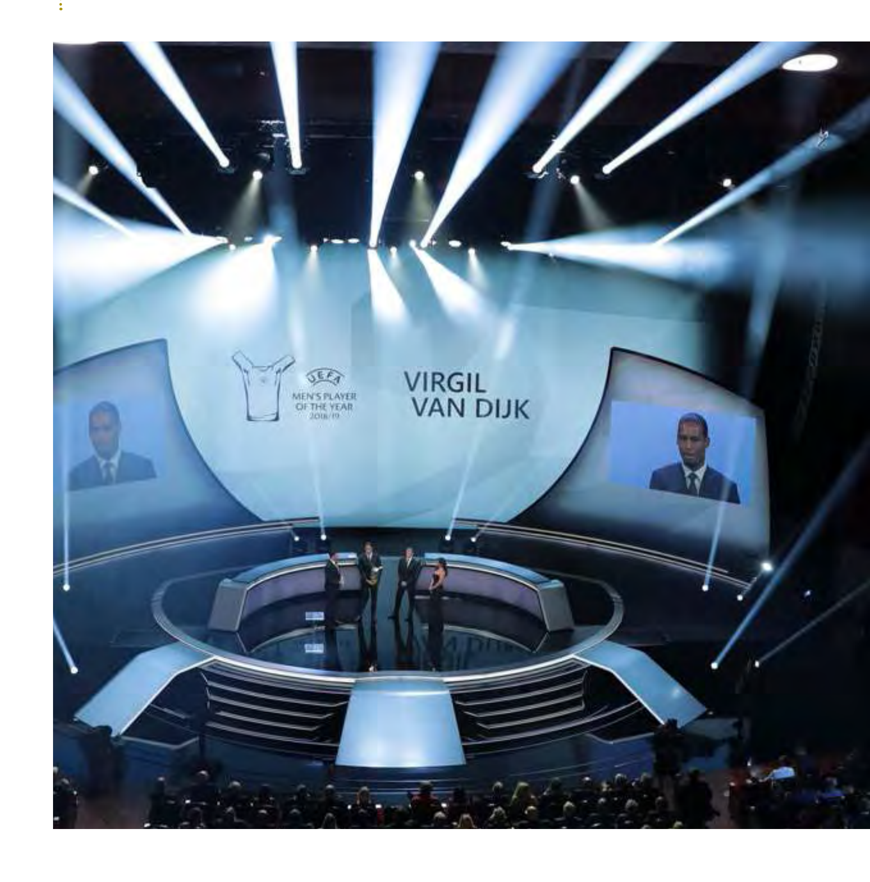


The Reds and Napoli have met so often in recent times that Jürgen Klopp and Carlo Ancelotti will be going for Christmas dinner together at this rate. Not only did the two clubs meet in last season's Champions League group phase, we've also played a couple of pre-season friendlies in Dublin (2018) and Edinburgh (2019).

Now we'll reconvene in Champions League Group E on the opening night in Naples with Liverpool looking for a better result in Stadio San Paolo than they achieved last year. The Redmen failed to have a single shot on target for the first time in a Champions League game since 2006 and were beaten 1-0 on a wet, blustery night by a 90th-minute Lorenzo Insigne goal.

By the time we met again on Matchday 6 at Anfield it was all to play for. Liverpool had to win 1-0 to progress to the knockout stages, Napoli knew a draw would put them through and knock the Reds out.

Mo Salah's clever 34th-minute goal – he nutmegged goalkeeper David Ospina at his near-post – proved to be the winning strike, but



only after Alisson made a stunning 92nd minute close-range save from Arkadiusz Milik to deny the Neapolitans a precious equaliser.

They'll return to Anfield on Matchday 5 in November and have strengthened their squad with Greek centre-back Kostas Manolas, Mexican winger Hirving Lozano, North Macedonian midfielder Elif Elmas and Spanish striker Fernando Llorente arriving in Southern Italy as Ancelotti looks to try to wrestle the Serie A title from Juventus, having finished eleven points behind Juve as runners-up last season.

SALZBURG



Austrian Bundesliga and Cup winners Salzburg – their full title of Red Bull Salzburg isn't permitted in UEFA competitions due to sponsorship rules – are no strangers to Napoli, having been knocked out of the Europa League by the Italians last season. But they will be first-time opponents for Liverpool.

Indeed the Reds haven't played in Austria since taking on Grazer AK in the Champions League third qualifying round in August 2004 in Rafael Benitez's first game as Liverpool manager. A Steven Gerrard double gave Liverpool a 2-0 win and, despite a 1-0 reverse at Anfield in the second leg, Rafa's Reds got through and went on to win the European Cup in Istanbul. Talk about omens!

Salzburg are Liverpool's first Group E Anfield opponents, visiting Merseyside on Matchday 2, and they appointed a new coach during the summer. American Jesse Marsch, previously with Red Bull New York in the MLS, was effectively promoted to Salzburg after German Marco Rose moved on to Borussia Moenchengladbach following two years as head coach.

Based at the 31,000-capacity Red Bull Arena in the Wals-Siezenheim municipality of Salzburg, the club was originally founded in 1933 as SV Austrian Salzburg and reached the UEFA Cup final in 1994, losing 2-0 to Inter Milan over two legs.

Bought by Red Bull in 2005, Die Mozartstadter (The Mozart townspeople – composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg) were re-founded as Red Bull Salzburg and swapped their traditional colours of violet-and-white for red-and-white – a move that alienated some traditional fans who formed their own club, Austria Salzburg.

Sadio Mane and Naby Keita are both former Salzburg players and they have a rising talent in the form of 19-year-old Norwegian striker Erling Braut Haland, son of ex-Man City and Leeds midfielder Alf-Inge.

A self-confessed Leeds fan – "my dream is to win the Premier League with Leeds" – he scored nine goals in a 12-0 win for Norway against Honduras at the Under-20 World Cup in May.

KRC GENK



The Belgian champions may be a new opponent for Liverpool but one member of our Champions League-winning squad knows them well. Divock Origi spent nine years training with Koninklijke Racing Club Genk – to give them their full name – between 2001 and 2010 before joining Lille when he was 15.

Origi isn't the only Belgian international to have been developed by Genk, a club based in the province of Limburg in the Flanders region, the Dutch-speaking northern part of the country.

Kevin de Bruyne, Thibaut Courtois and Yannick Carrasco are all former Genk youth team players, while De Smurfen (the Smurfs) now have 20-year-old Ianis Hagi, son of Romanian legend Gheorghe, in their ranks. A Romanian international midfielder, he was born in Istanbul when his father was playing for Galatasaray.

Tanzania international striker Mbwana Samatta is Genk's chief goal-getter, netting 32 goals in 51 games last season, while 21-year-old Norwegian international midfielder Sander Berge is also highly regarded.

Genk won the Belgian Jupiler Pro League in 2018/19 for only the fourth time in their history and have since added the Belgian Super Cup – Belgium's Community Shield – to the trophy cabinet


Fabinho and the Reds will face Napoli again

That represented a good start for manager Felice Mazzu, formerly with Charleroi, who only took charge of the club in June after title-winning boss Philippe Clement departed for Club Brugge.

Based at the Luminus Arena, built in 1999 and situated near a quiet residential area, getting tickets for Liverpool's visit to Genk on Matchday 3 may prove tricky for travelling Kopites as the stadium only has a small away enclosure (Block AA).

The teams also meet at Anfield on Matchday 4, which just happens to be Bonfire Night. So perhaps we should all expect fireworks...

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE GROUP STAGE DATES

TUE 17 SEP **NAPOLI** (A) 8PM
WED 2 OCT **SALZBURG** (H) 8PM
WED 23 OCT **GENK** (A) 8PM
TUE 5 NOV **GENK** (H) 8PM
WED 27 NOV **NAPOLI** (H) 8PM
TUE 10 DEC **SALZBURG** (A) 5.55PM



THE GROUPS

GROUP A
PARIS ST GERMAIN
REAL MADRID
CLUB BRUGGE
GALATASARAY

GROUP B
BAYERN MUNICH
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
OLYMPIACOS
CRVENA ZVEZDA

GROUP C
MANCHESTER CITY
SHAKHTAR DONETSK
DINAMO ZAGREB
ATALANTA

GROUP D
JUVENTUS
ATLETICO MADRID
BAYER LEVERKUSEN
LOKOMOTIV MOSCOW

GROUP E
LIVERPOOL
NAPOLI
SALZBURG
GENK

GROUP F
BARCELONA
BORUSSIA DORTMUND
INTER MILAN
SLAVIA PRAGUE

GROUP G
ZENIT ST PETERSBURG
BENFICA
LYON
LEIPZIG

GROUP H
CHELSEA
AJAX
VALENCIA
LILLE



ROBBO PRAISES BOBBY

Andy Robertson was asked about Bobby Firmino's importance to Liverpool after the Brazilian struck his 50th Premier League goal and the Scotland captain didn't hold back with his praise. "People will say there are better strikers," he said, "but for me what he does is so important to our team. We'd be lost without him. He's world class."



TRENT ACCEPTS PL RULING

When Jürgen Klopp was told in a post-match TV interview that Liverpool's opening goal in the 3-0 win at Burnley had been taken off Trent Alexander-Arnold and credited as a Chris Wood own goal his face fell, but the Reds right-back took it on the chin. "It doesn't matter," he said, "it's all about the team and winning a game at the end of the day." And Liverpool did win to remain the only team with a 100% record in all four divisions going into September.

FORWARD THINKING

Fabinho has become an important figure in the Reds' midfield since making the move from Monaco last summer. Here he talks about the challenges of the new season and the demands of helping Liverpool FC compete on all fronts

Liverpool have started the season with four wins in the Premier League and by winning the UEFA Super Cup. Have you taken the momentum from the way you finished last season into the new season?
We know that last season was great, but that's in the past now. We've received tremendous congratulations from the fans and they've welcomed us back with such affection, but we need to have the focus and ambition to win things this season. With the squad we have and the form we're in everything is in place to continue developing and achieving important things. As much as this helps with our confidence and everything, we have to sort of forget about last season and focus upon what's ahead.



Interview:
Chris McLoughlin

Considering how close the title race was with Manchester City last year, how important was it to make a good start in the Premier League?
Last season we achieved a club record number of points in the Premier League. I think it was the third highest points total in the history of the competition. This shows how much the level of competition is increasing. We're a great team but all our rivals are very strong as well, it shows that if we want to be champions we have to do something extra. It's not enough beating the record, sometimes we have to do even more. We've focused upon this at the start of this season and started really well. I hope this run of form continues as it will help with our confidence in the forthcoming games.

You must have been disappointed not to be selected by Brazil for the Copa America, but has not playing in the tournament helped you in terms of fitness going into the new season with Liverpool?
The Brazilian national team was one of my objectives as the Copa America was in my home country. Unfortunately I wasn't selected. I was upset at the time but as we had reached the Champions League final I didn't dwell on it. It was forgotten about quickly as I focused upon the final. Afterwards there was nothing I could do on the pitch, the manager is the one who picks the team. I supported my team-mates, I'd been part of all the squads in the lead up to the Copa America. I cheered them on, Bobby and Alisson especially and I was really happy when they won it.

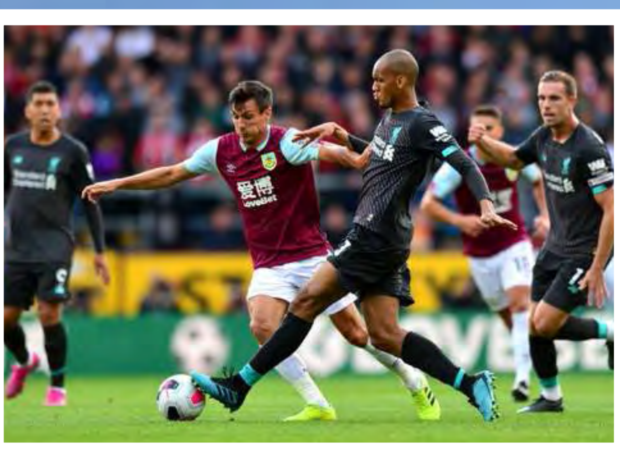
Liverpool play an intense style of football with lots of pressing. Have you ever played in a team that works as hard as this and how intense does it feel on the pitch?
No, Liverpool is the most intense team I've ever played for. At Monaco, our championship-winning season in particular, we worked a lot on the transition from defence to attack to be as fast as possible, we scored a lot of goals like that playing to the strengths of the players we had, so we worked very hard on this transition and counter-attacking. At Liverpool it's really different, the intensity and the speed we work at. It's good. I like the way we work and it's working, which is the most important thing.



The manager rotates the midfield players more than other positions. Is this necessary because of the amount of hard work you are asked to do?
Yes, partly. We have a lot of excellent midfield options so the manager is comfortable making changes, that's why he rotates a lot in this area. All those he can call upon are experienced players he can trust. The important thing is that with changes in the team we can maintain our standards. Part of it is that we have to work hard and run a lot in the midfield, we always look to give our everything and the manager knows who should play and we just need to work hard and be available.

This is your second season at Liverpool. How much did you learn and develop last year?
Last season was great for me. There were different moments. The start of the season was about patience, learning and observation. I grew in confidence and started playing more. I think I finished the season well. I demonstrated that I had adapted to the team and the tactics. An increased run in the team boosted my confidence as well. It was a very good first season for me, particularly as we won the Champions League – an excellent way to finish the season with such a flourish. And now for this season my confidence is high and I'm looking to work hard, improve and be increasingly important for the team.





LIVERPOOL IS THE MOST INTENSE TEAM I'VE EVER PLAYED FOR. IT'S REALLY DIFFERENT, THE INTENSITY AND THE SPEED WE WORK AT

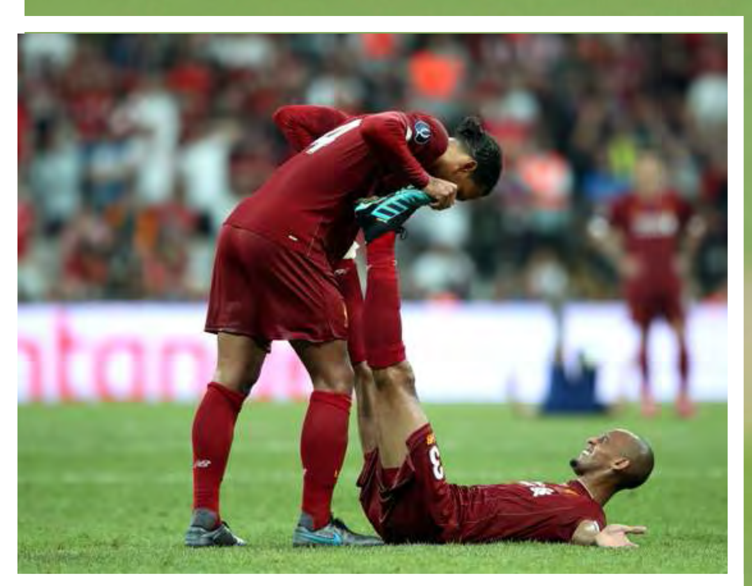
Do you think it's possible to improve and develop even further this season?
Definitely, I'm still young and it's only my second season with the team. Of course I have to want it, want to improve and have the ambition to take a step forward. That's what I aim to do, increase my contribution to the team and be an important player in my area of the pitch.

You are a very forward-thinking midfielder in that you quickly pass the ball forward whereas some midfielders prefer to pass sideways. How important is it to pass the ball forward quickly as a midfielder for this Liverpool team to play in the way Jürgen Klopp wants it to?
Ah, he doesn't really say, 'you must pass forward, you must pass forward'. I try to read the game as to when I can pass the ball forward or not. I know with the players we have up front there are always going to be options there, especially as we have Bobby who comes deep a lot and helps in the creation of plays. With the quality of our attacking players we know that if the ball comes to them, even if it's not that good a ball, you know they'll do something with it and start a good attacking move. That's why I like to play the ball forward. There are a lot of situations which we work on where you don't really need to see where the player is. As we get to know each other better you become familiar with the runs each player likes to make. That's why I try to play the ball forward a lot.

What was the experience of winning the Super Cup against Chelsea in Istanbul like?
It was really special given the way it went. We knew that we were playing for a trophy, another European title for us, for our careers here at Liverpool. So we came into the game with a strong desire to win in another European final against an English team. It was a complicated and competitive game but I think the drama at the end was great, extra-time and penalties and the suffering that goes with it. It was a special chapter for Adrian as well. It was really special to have won the final and extra special due to the manner in which we won.

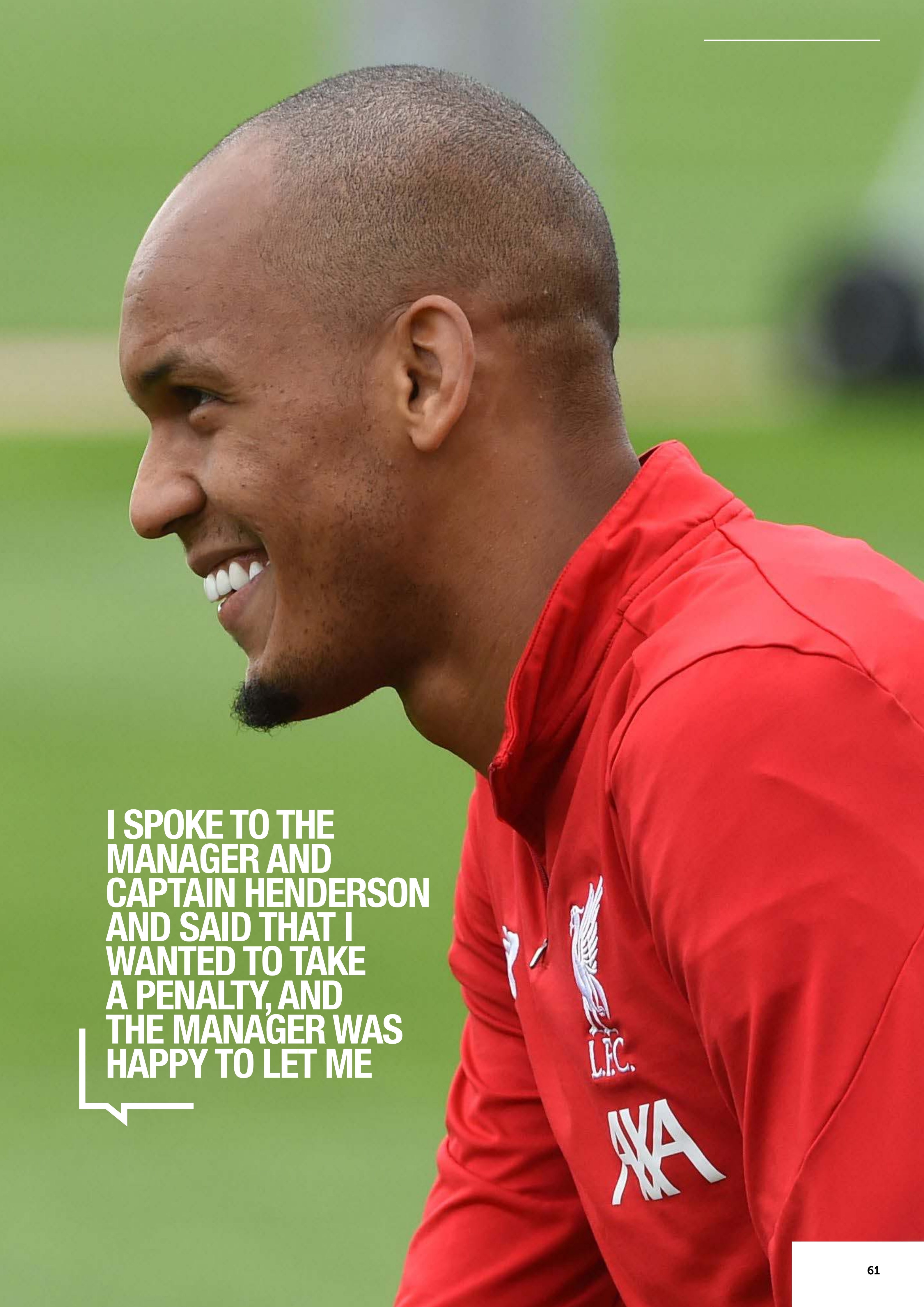
You'd gone down with cramp in extra-time but still took a penalty. Was it difficult to take? Were you confident you'd score?
Yes, I started getting cramp in both legs in the final moments of the game and it was taking a while to recover as it was both legs. When I got to the bench the manager had already chosen the penalty takers, as I'd been practising penalties during the week and I would normally be one of the takers. I spoke to the manager and captain Henderson and said that I wanted to take one, and the manager was happy to let me. I started walking and was feeling fine so believed I could take the penalty. I was calm and hit the penalty the way I'd trained and thankfully it went in.

You took a lot of penalties for Monaco but that was your first one for Liverpool in a competitive game. Do you wish you were taking penalties more regularly?
It's something I learnt at Monaco and looked to perfect my technique in training as well. Here at Liverpool I'm always practising penalties for when the opportunity arises. Of course I'd like to take penalties, but we know the options here are very good. If another opportunity arises I'll grab the ball and take it.





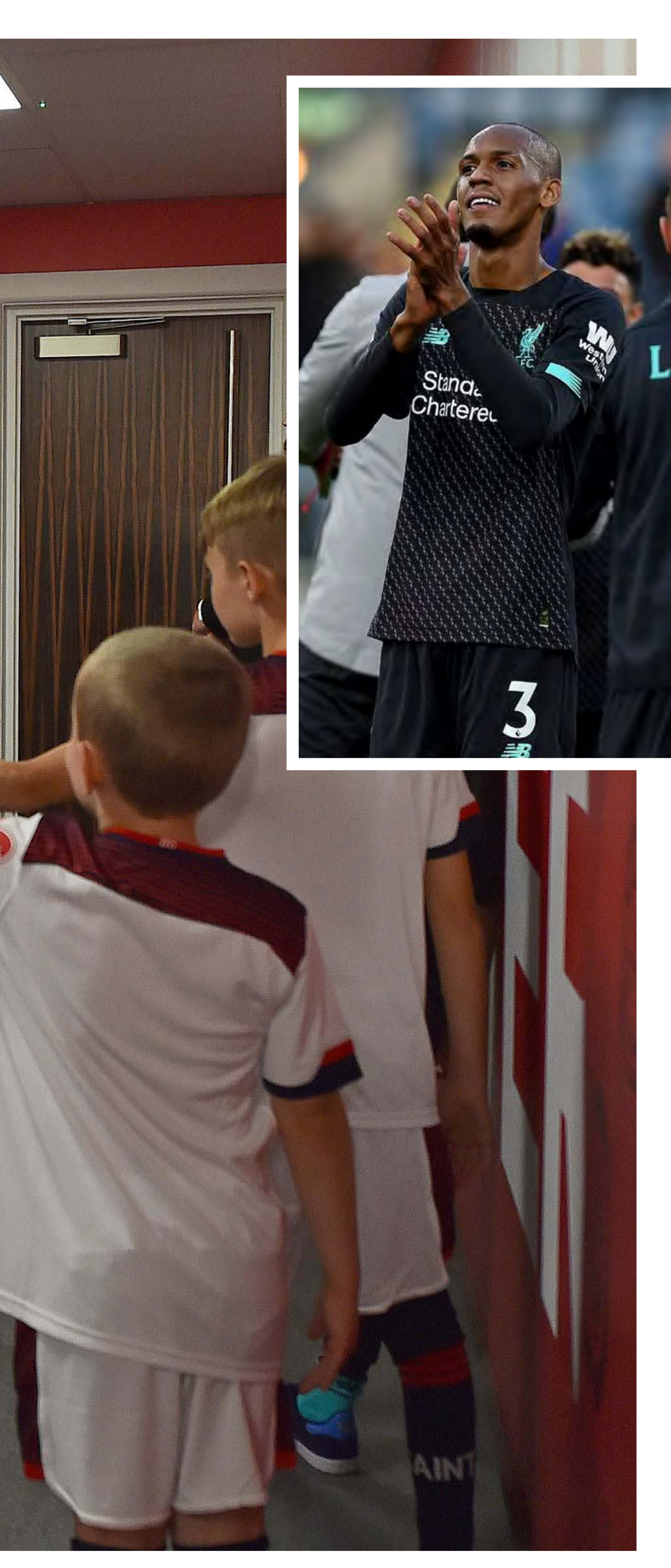




I SPOKE TO THE MANAGER AND CAPTAIN HENDERSON AND SAID THAT I WANTED TO TAKE A PENALTY, AND THE MANAGER WAS HAPPY TO LET ME



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Should Liverpool be considered one of the favourites to win the Champions League again having got to the final in 2018 and won it in 2019?
One of the favourites, I think. The reigning champion is always the favourite and given Liverpool's run of form over the last two competitions we must be considered one of the main contenders if not the outright favourites. But it doesn't put any additional pressure on us, we know how to deal with it, we know how to handle the pressure. It won't be a problem.

How difficult do you think it will be to defend your title as European champions?
The Champions League is the toughest competition in Europe with all the best teams involved. We'll do everything to qualify for the round of 16. It's a case of taking things step by step, see who we come up against and calmly do our best.

Finally, no English team has won the Premier League and Champions League in the same season since Manchester United in 1999. Is it possible for any English team to win both titles in the same year given the competitive nature of the Premier League?
Last year we showed it was possible – normally a team with 97 points are champions. We were able to maintain the intensity and high standard in both competitions. It's exhausting, it's difficult, it demands a lot from the entire squad of players. It demands a lot of the coaching staff as well, working on recovery and preparation every two days for a high-level game. It is possible, but it's very, very difficult, all the players have to be prepared and focussed. This team has shown that it is focussed, has ambition and is prepared for this challenge.



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Tom Green, Reading



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JOEL IN THE GOALS

After scoring once in each of his first three seasons as a Liverpool player, Joel Matip has already netted twice in 2019/20. He was the Reds' goalscorer in the Community Shield at Wembley and headed his first ever goal in front of the Kop in the 3-1 Anfield win against Arsenal. Can he outscore Virgil van Dijk this season? It's a contest we'll be keeping an eye upon...



BEST IN THE WORLD?

A lot of people think so and now Virgil van Dijk will find out if FIFA agree. Our number four has been nominated for the 2019 Best FIFA Men's Player award alongside Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo with the winner announced at a ceremony in Milan on Monday 23 September. Tough competition, but don't bet against him.


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“AS SOON AS I TOUCHED THE BALL I THOUGHT THAT’S IN”

He's only gone and won it!

From Michael Owen's must-read new book, the story behind one of the most thrilling FA Cup finales of all time



Michael Owen's new autobiography Reboot was published this month and inside it the former Liverpool striker opens up on his life and career like never before.

"I reckon my career has split a lot of opinion," he admits. "I get a fair amount of stick on social media and through things like that. You can do a million interviews but no-one seems to get the message once and for all.

"So I decided that it would have been nice to write a book. At least if it's in black and white, I can tell everybody exactly how I feel, what happened, the situations and all the little nuances that nobody knows anything about.

"Also, when you're playing in your career you've not really got a voice in terms of saying certain things, so it's been really enjoyable doing, therapeutic almost to get it all out and say what has happened."

From his early days as teenage boy-wonder at Liverpool to the treble-winning season of 2000/01 and his ultimate, and controversial, departure from Anfield to Real Madrid in 2004, he hasn't held back on any of the big talking-points including why he ultimately never returned to LFC.

Michael also opens up on mental-health issues, his friendship with Jamie Carragher, his relationships with managers Gerard Houllier and Rafa Benitez plus how he was never quite as angelic or boring as his media persona suggests.

He also recalls, in glorious detail, the 2001 FA Cup final victory against Arsenal at Cardiff when he scored both goals, but only after Houllier refused to let him wear his new football boots. Here it is...





Lining up at Cardiff

Every professional footballer hopes to have a brilliant day in their career – a game where they can look back, later in life, and say I reached the pinnacle. In my case, and over the course of my career, I was lucky enough to have two or three such days – and the 2001 FA Cup final against Arsenal on that roasting hot day was certainly one of them.

On paper, we were massive underdogs. Arsenal had class and experience all over the pitch. Wherever you looked, you saw players that could either score, or stop you scoring: Tony Adams, Patrick Vieira, Robert Pires, Thierry Henry, Ashley Cole – the list went on and on. As good as we had been that season, and we had been, Arsenal seemed to have just that little bit more in the locker.

Curiously, my locker had a part to play in that cup final.

In the weeks leading up to the game, I'd worn my standard Umbro boots. I'd been scoring goals. Before that final in Cardiff, Umbro's Simon Marsh brought me a pair of a new, special edition boots they'd created for me. In his eyes, the FA Cup final was the ideal opportunity to showcase them, given that millions of TV eyes would have been on one of the game's most recognisable players. To Umbro it was a perfect marketing opportunity – and I, as usual, was happy to accommodate Simon's wishes.

In training during the week before Cardiff, both the assistant-manager Phil Thompson and Gerard Houllier noticed me training in the new boots. Gerard called me over.



The equaliser

'What are you doing?' he asked. 'What do you mean, boss? These are my boots for the weekend,' I replied. 'You're not wearing them,' he said. 'I haven't got a choice. Umbro have asked me to,' I told him. 'You have to wear the boots you've been playing well in,' he said – clearly getting irritated.

He was adamant. I had just scored two at home against Chelsea. I was in a rich vein of form.

I called Umbro. 'My gaffer doesn't want me to wear the new boots. What can I do?' To be fair to Umbro, they were very reasonable about it. They actually turned it into a positive and it became a bit of a headline as a result – The Gaffer made me wear my old boots!

I put the new boots in the locker and committed to the old and proven ones as I'd been instructed.

For seventy minutes, in one of the hottest and most oppressive days I can remember ever playing football in, Arsenal absolutely battered us at Cardiff. It was a rear-guard action epitomised by our captain Sami Hyypia.

As he had been many times over the years, Sami was immense that day as Arsenal pressed. He won key balls in the air, put in last-ditch goal-saving tackles and cleared shots off the line. For seventy two minutes, we held firm. And then, as it looked like we'd take the game into extra-time, Freddie Ljungberg broke the deadlock.

You would have thought, having survived so long in the heat and then conceded with less than twenty minutes left, that we would have wilted. Well, let me tell you: the opposite was the case that day. Like a boxer that'd been swinging hard for a knockout punch, even after they scored, I could sense that Arsenal had less left in the tank than we did. They seemed to be punched-out.

In the 83rd minute, the ball dropped to me in the box after Markus Babbel diverted a Gary McAllister free-kick into my path. As if I'd envisaged it in advance, the moment arrived. I hooked the ball into the bottom corner and the Millennium Stadium erupted. Five minutes later, things got even better.

I thought: We'll win this. Then I thought: I'm scoring the winner.

Like the goal against Argentina [for England in 1998], my second goal against Arsenal in the FA Cup final is one I need to re-watch to recall the exact details. The feelings – I'll never forget.







We were under pressure on the edge of our own penalty-area, as I recall. In the ensuing scramble, the ball broke to Patrik Berger. As he looked downfield, like a quarterback surveying his wide receivers, I was in the centre-circle.

One look at Patrik's eyes and I set off. His ball was absolutely perfect in that it was inside their right-back Lee Dixon, and outside their centre-half Tony Adams. There was a clear channel in front of me to run in. I ran – and I did so as if lions were in pursuit.

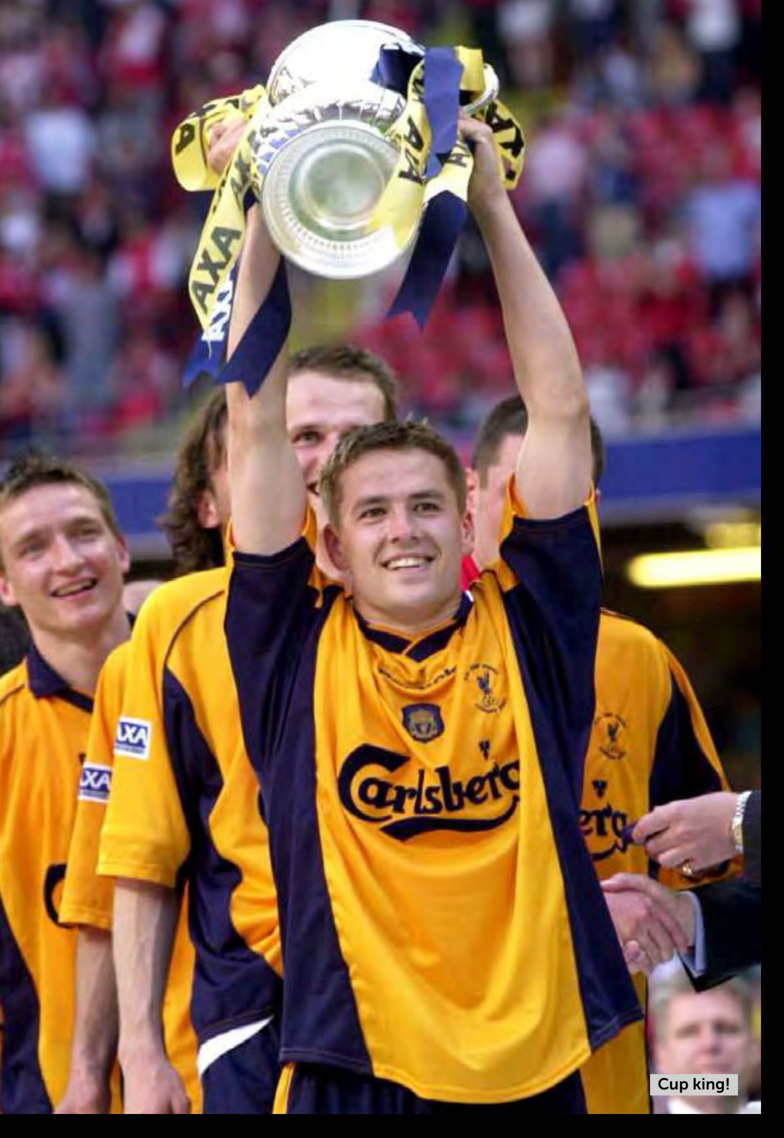
As good a player as Lee Dixon was and as much as he was sitting slightly deeper than I was, I beat him to the ball, held him off and hurtled towards the penalty area.

Tony Adams had given me nothing that day; any time I took the ball past him he always seemed to find to find a way to block and obstruct in the most subtly brilliant way. This time, with me bearing down on goal and running flat out, as he scrambled across to intercept, I had the chance I'd waited all day for. I thought, I've got you here...

For a split-second, I considered cutting back inside him to manoeuvre the ball onto my favoured right foot. Instinctively, and as there was no time for anything else, I realised that (a) to do so was risking bringing Lee Dixon back into the equation. He'd drifted over towards the penalty spot. And (b) I was running too fast to make the change of direction anyway.

I was left with only one option. Given that I was already pretty wide, and being pushed further and further left by Adams, the only way of scoring was to swing one back across David Seaman with my left foot.

Looking back at the replay now, the target was minuscule – there really was only one place the ball could go without David


Cup king!



saving it. And because I'd spent my childhood years rehearsing for this kind of moment, that's exactly where I put it. If you took me to the local park now I'd probably have a one-in-ten chance of repeating it!

As soon as I touched the ball, I thought, that's in. As tight an angle as it was, the connection on the ball was absolutely perfect. As if in slow-motion, I watched it head towards the bottom corner. For a horrible moment I actually thought Seaman was saving it – his wingspan appeared huge; I thought he'd done enough. And then it hit the net.

The feelings in that moment are hard to explain even now. It was one thing scoring in an FA Cup final in Wales – where I'd lived my entire life. It was another thing entirely scoring the winner.

Then, beyond that, the circumstances under which I scored that winner: a finish, under pressure, as the clock clicked down, with absolutely zero margin for error, against Arsenal, against David Seaman, with my left foot...

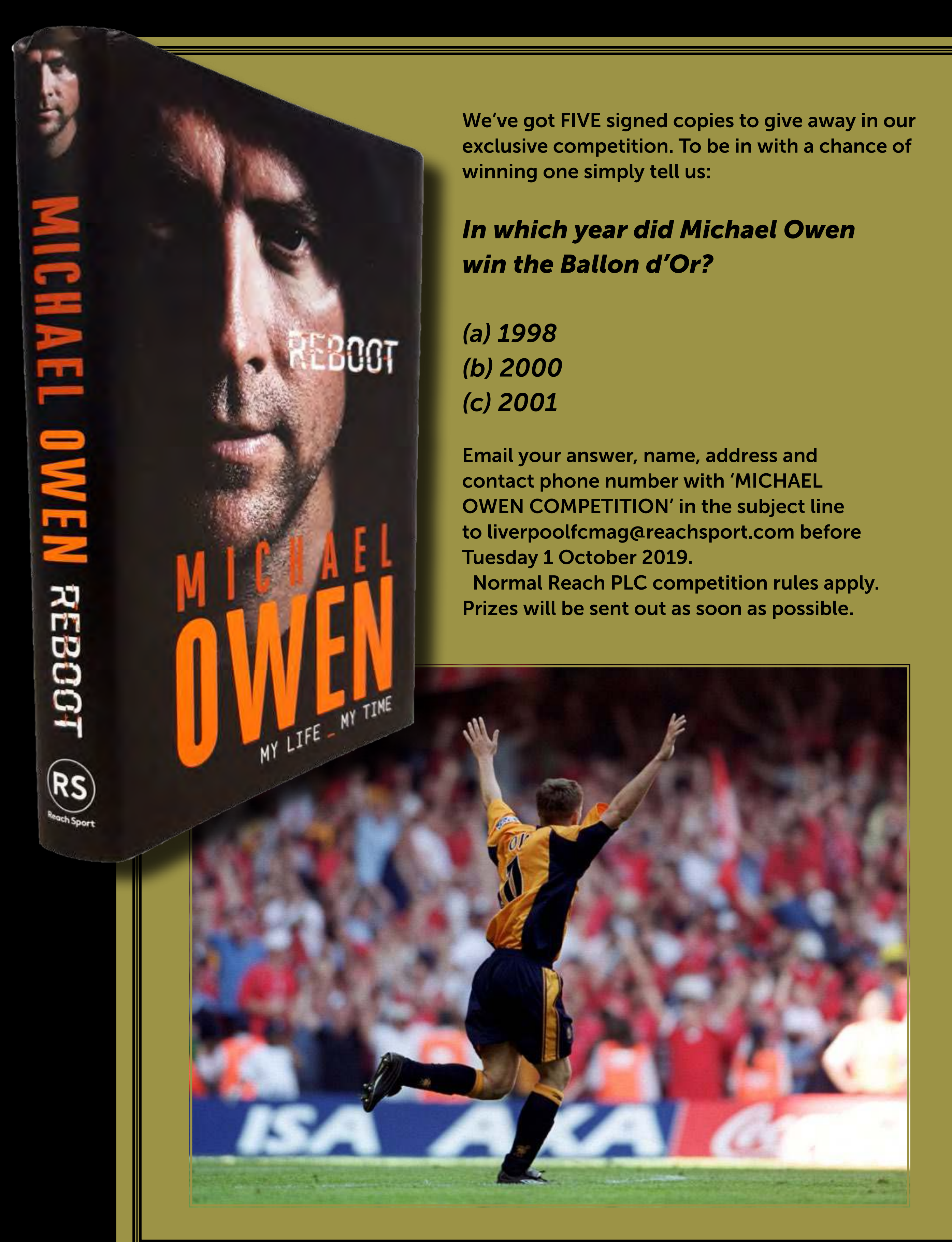
In that moment, it was all too much. So obviously, I did what I felt was the natural thing and performed a weird hybrid kind of somersault as I ran to the corner flag in front of our fans! I'm not sure why I chose that day to attempt it either. As much as I'd done occasional handsprings in the garden when I was a kid, I hadn't exactly been practising them since with an FA Cup final celebration in mind.

As embarrassing as that celebration now is, what a day that was. I'll treasure the 2001 FA Cup final forever.

• Extracted and abridged from Michael Owen: Reboot. Available now from reachsportshop.com for £15 – 25 per cent off the RRP cover price of £20.



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SHAQ WILL BE NEEDED

He's yet to start a game for the Reds this season, but Jürgen Klopp has made it clear that Xherdan Shaqiri has a part to play. "We will need him, he knows that 100 per cent," said the Liverpool manager. "He is in a good mood, training hard, doing what he has to do and is ready for the moment when he has to help the team on the pitch."



300 UP FOR KLOPP

It may not be up there with winning a European Cup, but Liverpool's 2-1 victory at Southampton meant the Reds had won 300 points under Jürgen Klopp's management in his 146th league game. That set a new club record, beating the 150 games it took Kenny Dalglish to accumulate 300 points. The question now is can Klopp become the first LFC manager since Sir Kenny to lead Liverpool to a league title? We hope so...



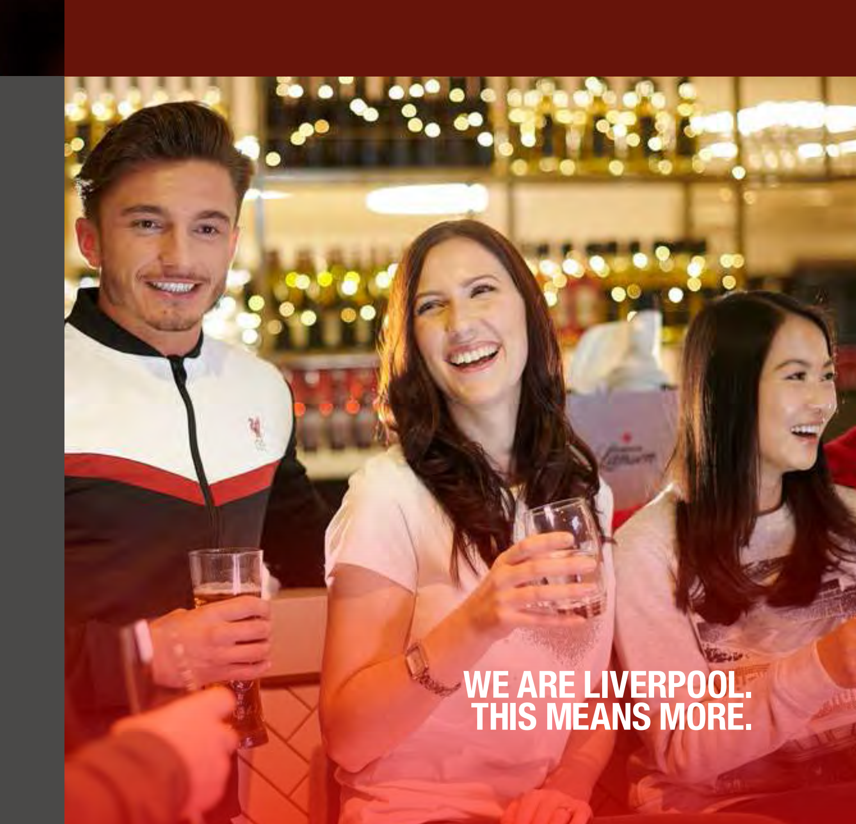


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ANOTHER LEVEL



New girls, higher goals. Fresh from Marines boot camp, Reds boss Vicky Jepson previews the new Barclays FA Women's Super League season

Interview: William Hughes

Vicky, how would you assess the pre-season build-up?
I think the group have bonded really, really well with activities that have brought us closer together. A pre-season tour of the USA when you're living in each other's pockets for ten days also helps you get to understand how each other works, not just the players but the backroom staff as well.

That was a good start to our campaign with two good but completely different friendlies out in America too. One really tested us physically because it was the second week that we were back into pre-season and they [Cleveland Ambassadors] flew in a lot of strong players to make it a competitive game.

The second one [Metropolitan All Stars in Boston] wasn't as challenging physically but we had challenges because they had a back-six and we had to try and break them down. So for our creating and scoring it was testing and it gave us a confidence-boost as well seeing Courtney [Sweetman-Kirk] get four goals and Rins [Rinsola Babajide] get on the scoresheet in a 6-0 win. It was a great trip out there.

You then spent a few days with the Marines at Altcar Training Camp in Hightown...
Yes, spending some time with the Marines was a test for us all. We all decided to do it together, the backroom staff did it as well as the players.

We all put the 'camo' cream on, we all had the big backpacks and big boots which gave many of us blisters! And we all marched round like we were in the Marines. It was physically tough, especially for us staff. But we decided that, no matter what, we were all going to get through it together.

Sleeping on concrete floors was tough and getting up early hours and being out doing exercises – running and taking on shooting ranges and so on – took us away from the one thing that we have in common which is football.

So that was another great activity which has drawn us closer and tested us physically and mentally to overcome some of the challenges we face.



New full-back Becky Jane

This is the first pre-season you've started as manager – has it given you more time to work on things with the players?
We've been working hard out on the grass to find out more about the new players, where we can push our existing players on with their development, and how we can bond as a team to compete around the moments of the game we will face. I'm really pleased with the work we've done. The pre-season seems to have gone really quickly and I can't wait for the first game now.

I know every one of the existing players that have come with me on this journey to this point. I've seen them at their worst, I've seen them at their best. I've seen them when they're sad, I've seen them when they're happy. So to work with them now from scratch and try to push them on to another level is something that I'd been really looking forward to.

You've brought in England winger Mel Lawley, experienced right-back Becky Jane and young midfielder Jade Bailey...
The new players have gelled quickly. Becky, Jade and Mel are all so different in so many ways.

Becky's very laid-back but positive and professional and has got years of experience playing in the WSL behind her. Mel Lawley is a frightening forward who has been in the Lionesses' international set-up and can certainly create and score goals as she's shown in our pre-season where she's assisted many goals.

Then Jade has come in and really shown what she can bring to the team technically, which has been great. Looking at how she can link play from our back-four up to our front-three has been really good to see. We also saw Becky get on the scoresheet in a friendly at Coventry United and I'm sure we'll see Mel (pictured on opposite page) find the back of the net soon without a shadow of doubt!

The big thing with those three is that last season not one of them were playing regular minutes. So for me it was about how I could get them 90 minutes and expose them to a lot of full games and see how they coped and how hungry they were to want to be on a pitch playing 90 minutes in the WSL because it's something that they weren't given last season.

In Jade's case that was due to injury reasons and then Becky and Mel spent a lot of time sat on the bench at Reading and Man City respectively. So it's a really good season for them to show what they're about and why they should be starting for us and playing matches in the WSL.


Midfield arrival Jade Bailey



You start with Reading at Prenton Park, a team you had three tight games against last season; a narrow home defeat and away draw in the WSL and a draw followed by a penalty shoot-out win in the Continental Tyres League Cup...
Reading are a very good team and they have a very good set-up so we know that it's a tough game for us to start our season and by no means are we thinking that we're just going to just turn up and take a win. But ultimately we want to make sure that we start off on the right foot and that means getting three points.

We know that we're not going to be given those three points and that we'll have to work for them. There are no luxury players in our team – everyone has to work hard out of possession and be clinical in possession to make sure we take those three points.

The next two league games see you visit newly-promoted duo Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United. It must be good for the Super League to have two such strong clubs joining the ranks...
It will. I'm delighted for Spurs and for United. It's a good step in the right direction for the women's game to see them come up and they've both worked really hard to get there.

[Ex-Liverpool defender] Casey Stoney has done a great job at United to get them up in such a short turnaround and then Karen Hills at Spurs has done a fantastic job. The journey that she's taken them on – right the way from the bottom of the Championship to the top – is to be applauded. So we welcome them with open arms and I wish them the best of luck but obviously not when we come up against them.

WE'RE HOPING MORE LIVERPOOL FANS WILL COME ALONG TO GET BEHIND THE TEAM AND BE PART OF THE GROWTH OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL AND OUR RED FAMILY



Vicky addresses the squad

2019/20 FIXTURES



SEPTEMBER			
8 READING	H	FAWSL	2pm
15 Tottenham	A	FAWSL	2pm
22 SHEFF UTD	H	Conti Cup	12pm
28 Man United	A	FAWSL	12pm
OCTOBER			
13 BRISTOL CITY	H	FAWSL	12pm
20 Coventry United	A	Conti Cup	2pm
27 Birmingham City	A	FAWSL	2pm
NOVEMBER			
2 Aston Villa	A	Conti Cup	7.30pm
17 EVERTON	H	FAWSL	2pm
21 Blackburn R	A	Conti Cup	7.45pm
24 Arsenal	A	FAWSL	2pm
DECEMBER			
1 Man City	A	FAWSL	2pm
8 WEST HAM	H	FAWSL	2pm
11 DURHAM	H	Conti Cup	6.30pm
15 CHELSEA	H	FAWSL	2pm
JANUARY			
5 Brighton	A	FAWSL	2pm
12 MAN UNITED	H	FAWSL	12pm
19 Bristol City	A	FAWSL	3pm
FEBRUARY			
2 BIRMINGHAM CITY	H	FAWSL	2pm
9 Everton	A	FAWSL	12.30pm
13 ARSENAL	H	FAWSL	7pm
23 West Ham	A	FAWSL	3pm
MARCH			
22 MAN CITY	H	FAWSL	2pm
29 Reading	A	FAWSL	2pm
APRIL			
5 TOTTENHAM	H	FAWSL	2pm
26 BRIGHTON	H	FAWSL	12pm
MAY			
16 Chelsea	A	FAWSL	TBC

INS AND OUTS 2019/20

IN: Becky Jane (from Reading), Mel Lawley (Manchester City), Jade Bailey (Chelsea).

OUT: Laura Coombs (to Manchester City), Leandra Little (Sheffield United), Jasmine Matthews, Yana Daniels (both Bristol City), Simran Jhamat, Annabel Blanchard (both Leicester City), Lauren Thomas (Blackburn Rovers), Ellie Fletcher (Sheffield United, loan).

Last season was a testing one for the team. Are you optimistic that they can improve on the eighth-placed finish this time around?
That's the big aim and we have spoken about it time and time again after we reflected on last season where we built good foundations. At the end of the season we said that we've got to push on even further, we don't want to stand still.

Finishing higher than eighth is something that we need to be doing as Liverpool Football Club.

The group-stage draw for the Continental Tyres League Cup has seen the team pitched against five opponents from the Women's Championship. Even so, they will be tough opponents...
Yes, they are all decent teams. Aston Villa have invested a lot into their set-up. I went to watch them the other week against Sheffield United and they've attracted some fantastic players into their squad so they're going to be a tough opponent and playing on their 3G pitch is also going to be another challenge.

Durham are always a tough team, too. They're the bogey team as no WSL team likes to play against them because Steph [Libbey] has got them well-drilled and they're very hard to break down and physical too, so that will be a challenge.

Every one of those teams that we will face in the Conti Cup are going to be very difficult to play against but we will make sure that we do everything that we can to come away with the wins and make progress in the competition.

England's run to the semi-finals of this summer's FIFA World Cup, a new WSL headline sponsor and the launch of a new FA app have all added to the interest around the women's game going into the new season...
Absolutely. I think the viewing figures for the World Cup were the best there's ever been for the women's game and hopefully we can feed into that. There was a lot of interest not only in the Lionesses games but in the other games as well, especially for the World Cup final.

We're hoping that will help to attract bigger crowds to our Barclays WSL games and more Liverpool supporters will come along to get behind the team and be part of the growth in the women's game and of our red family.

The FA have launched an app which will stream all of the games which is a great initiative. But in my opinion there is no substitute for being at a game live and so we hope to see lots of local fans down at Prenton Park getting behind the team.

BOOT **CAMP**



As part of their pre-season preparations Liverpool FC Women spent two days training with the Royal Marines, a group of 19 players and eight staff making the short journey to Altcar Training Camp.

They were split into three teams and subjected to tough physical tests on circuit-runs carrying full kit and a heavy stretcher before tackling an assault course. Another task required them to find ten missing items hidden in a nearby wood. They then set up a 'harbour' among the trees where they learned how to apply camouflage and cook military rations, before setting off to makeshift accommodation near the sand dunes which were to be their shelter for the night, sleeping on roll-mats. A night exercise saw the players using night-vision goggles and learning how to manoeuvre towards an enemy under the cover of darkness.

Manager Vicky Jepson, who was among the group taking part, said: "Pre-season is an important time for us to build up physical-conditioning, improve communication and bond as a team and the tough challenges at Altcar will only have helped us on those fronts. I'd like to thank everyone at the Royal Marines for a fantastic if challenging couple of days."





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MACCA

It's over 20 years since Steve McManaman played his 364th and final game for Liverpool, netting 66 goals in total. Nicknamed 'Shaggy' due to his resemblance to the Scooby-Doo character, he was one of the most exciting players to wear the Red shirt in the 1990s with his ability to dribble past opponents and create goals, usually for Robbie Fowler, flourishing after manager Roy Evans moved him off the wing into a roaming central role.



CHANGING LIVES FOR THE BETTER

Profiling Liverpool Football Club's season-on-season impact off the pitch in the community



Last season was a success for Liverpool FC as much off the pitch as on, as the Reds became champions of Europe for the sixth time as well as proving their social responsibility as a club by supporting and investing in local communities.

Community work is conducted by the club's charity, LFC Foundation, and its dedicated local community programme, Red Neighbours.

LFC Foundation's mission is to create life-changing opportunities for children and young people in Merseyside and beyond, while Red Neighbours specifically focuses on making a difference to people living in and around the Anfield area in the L4, L5 and L6 postcodes.

Foundation director Matt Parish says: "The 2018/19 season was one of our best to date, with over 28,000 children and young people taking part in our programmes – which is an 86 per cent increase on 2017/18.

"In addition to our programmes we have continued to forge strong relationships with our partners to extend our reach and impact further. A great example of this is through our partnership with IntoUniversity and the University



of Liverpool, which has helped over 1,300 disadvantaged young people in North Liverpool to reach their education potential through a decided learning centre."

Forbes Duff, senior manager at Red Neighbours, adds: "As a club we strive to be a good neighbour and support our local community. We have a social responsibility to do so, particularly in Anfield, which has some of the most deprived postcodes in the UK.

"All of our activities and events have been designed in response to local needs such as social isolation, food-poverty and promoting healthy living through physical activity.

"Over 19,500 local people attended our activities and events last season (2018/19), up 33 per cent from the season before. Our work continues to go from strength-to-strength and we will continue to strive to reach more people in the local community."

LFC Foundation and Red Neighbours continue to build close relationships with schools across the city, in particular 25 that neighbour Anfield.

A snapshot of their delivery includes educational programmes, multi-sports sessions, half-term sports camps, breakfast clubs during school holidays at Anfield, social events and sports activities for local residents aged 50-plus, donating free match-tickets to Anfield schools, matchday foodbank collections, and arranging for schoolkids to meet Liverpool players.

During the school holidays the free breakfast clubs provided a meal to over 1,400 local individuals. LFC fans also helped the club to feed more than 3,037 local people through matchday foodbank donations, via the North Liverpool Foodbank.

Last season LFC Foundation invested over £150,000 in their partner organisations – Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and IntoUniversity – which has helped to fund a range of innovative projects that will have a lasting legacy by improving the lives of young people in Merseyside and beyond.





SOME OF THE NUMBERS...

28,630 children and young people took part in LFC Foundation programmes during the 18/19 season, up from **15,416** in 17/18.

LFC Foundation worked with over **8,000** primary schoolchildren in our partner schools.

652 young people and adults with complex and additional needs were supported through LFC Foundation school and community football sessions.

337 girls took part in LFC Foundation football sessions across eleven sites, with pathways into grassroots teams, to help grow the game.

1,642 young people in high-crime areas attended LFC Foundation community football, educational and personal development sessions.

5,027 young people and family members took part in weekly LFC Foundation multi-sports and activity sessions and events in local parks.

LFC Foundation's International work reached **3,557** young people across the world.

Over **9,110**kg of food collected – a total of **3,037** people provided for, thanks to matchday collections.

Over **2,200** residents aged 50-plus took part in Red Neighbours monthly social events and sporting activities including Monday Club, Walking Football and Chair Yoga.

1,100 schoolkids from 25 local schools got the opportunity to enjoy a Premier League game for free at Anfield; another **855** match-tickets were donated by LFC partners for the local community and charities.

240 pupils had the opportunity to meet first-team players and spend time with their heroes at local schools in West Derby.

WHAT'S IN



LFC WOMENS NAVY ZIP THRU HOODY
(A12730) £35.00





LFC JUNIOR GREY MARL GLITTER LIVERBIRD HOODY
(A12830) £20.00

LFC JUNIOR DIAMANTE PINK CREST TEE
(A12823) £15.00

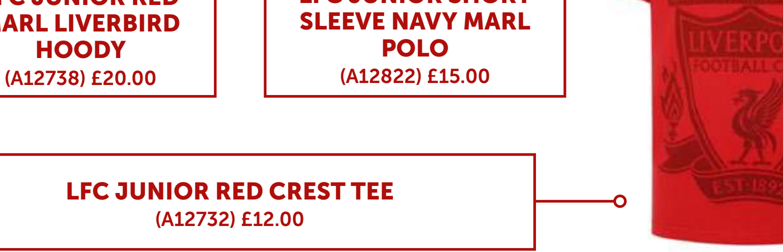


LFC WOMENS LIVERBIRD RED MARL TEE
(A12800) £20.00



LFC JUNIOR RED MARL LIVERBIRD HOODY
(A12738) £20.00

LFC JUNIOR SHORT SLEEVE NAVY MARL POLO
(A12822) £15.00



LFC JUNIOR RED CREST TEE
(A12732) £12.00



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(A12670) £45.00



LFC MENS CONNINSBY VINTAGE RED POLO
(A12720) £22.00

LFC MENS GREY COLOUR BLOCK POCKET POLO
(A12790) £25.00



LFC WOMENS ICE MARL CREST TEE
(A12799) £20.00

LFC MENS RETRO STRIPE NAVY TEE
(A12920) £25.00

LFC MENS VINTAGE RED RETRO KAGOOL
(A12674) £40.00



LFC MENS 88-89 CREST RED TEE
A12662)
£20.00



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What's On

SEPT/OCT





ANFIELD, LONDON, BUCKS AND YORKS

With the Premier League now back in full swing, the Reds return to action after the first international break of the season with a home game against Newcastle United. Steve Bruce brings his new-look Toon to Anfield for a lunchtime kick-off on Saturday 14 September with the Reds aiming for a repeat of the winning results they achieved against Newcastle last season.

September's Premier League schedule also includes a couple of away games. First up the Reds travel to Stamford Bridge looking to reproduce their Super Cup triumph - but this time in 90 minutes - when they go face-to-face with Frank Lampard's side for the second time in five weeks.

Jürgen Klopp's men sign off for the month with a trip to Sheffield United. The game against Chris Wilder's Blades will be the Reds' first trip to Bramall Lane since August 2006 when a Robbie Fowler penalty rescued a point in a 1-1 draw.

Sandwiched between those two Premier League games is another awayday. Liverpool will take on MK Dons for the first time when the clubs meet in the third round of the Carabao Cup at the League One side's Stadium MK on Wednesday 25 September.

SEPT/OCT

What's On

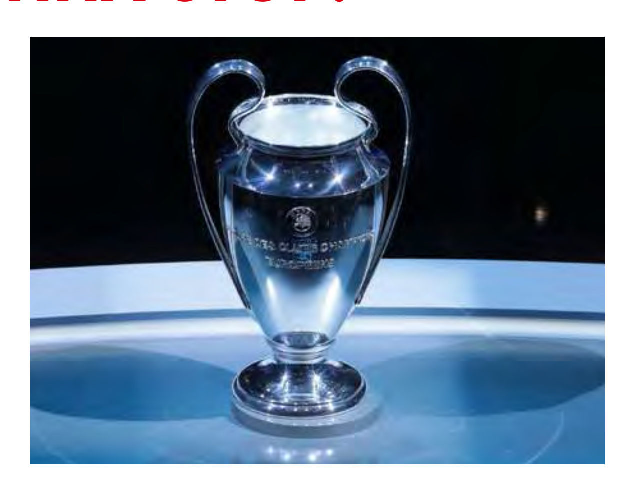
WE'RE NEVER GONNA STOP!

The Reds begin their defence of the UEFA Champions League trophy on Tuesday 17 September when they make the trip to Napoli's Stadio San Paolo for the second successive season.

Jürgen Klopp said of the draw: "Napoli again! I don't know how often I've now played against Napoli but they're obviously a very experienced side.

"I will need now to have another, closer look at Genk and Salzburg, but I already know they are very young, very exciting and very fresh, so it will be interesting, 100 per cent."

Anfield will host it's first Champions League game of the season on Wednesday 2 October when Salzburg are the visitors. A full look at our group stage opponents can be found on pages 48 to 51 of this magazine.



ALL THOSE YEARS AGO...

38 years since Ian Rush scored his first goal for Liverpool on 30 September 1981.

41 years since that famous 7-0 defeat of Tottenham at Anfield on 2 September 1978.

45 years since the club's record victory: 11-0 v Stromsgodset on 17 September 1974.

55 years since the Reds defeated KR Reykjavik in their first European tie at Anfield on 14 September 1964.

51 years since Alun Evans made a scoring debut for Liverpool FC on 21 September 1968.

And it's 30 years ago since the Reds beat Crystal Palace 9-0 on 12 September 1989...

Was it really three decades ago? Time has flown since the Reds dismantled Crystal Palace at Anfield with their biggest post-war league victory.

What a night it was. Nine goals, eight different scorers. Wow! Goals from the versatile Scot Steve Nicol bookended a victory on a chastening evening for Eagles keeper Perry Suckling and his side.

Liverpool led 3-0 at the break with Nicol's goal followed by strikes from Steve McMahon and Ian Rush. But it was after the break that the Reds ran riot in front of the Kop. Steve Coppell's side saw midfielder Geoff Thomas miss from a penalty spot in an act that rather summed up Palace's performance.

Gary Gillespie (pictured below) and Peter Beardsley had made it 5-0 before the highlight of the night came when John Aldridge, on the cusp of leaving his beloved Reds for Real Sociedad, replaced Beardsley following the award of a penalty and ran straight to the spot to convert form 12-yards.

"Emotions were running high," Aldo told the official matchday programme. "I knew I was leaving and I wanted to take that penalty."

The final 11 minutes saw John Barnes add a seventh goal before Glenn Hysen scored his first goal for Liverpool, Nicol nabbed the ninth on the stroke of full-time.

"Not a team in the land would have lived with the Reds that night," added Aldridge. "The team performance was brilliant and the goals were shared around. The two lasting memories for me were the penalty and my farewell to the Kop. I gave away my boots and shirt. I had to give those supporters something in those emotional moments."



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Stephane Henchoz 45 on 7 September

Markus Babbel 47 on 8 September

Steve Ogrizovic 62 on 12 September

David Thompson 42 on 12 September

Karlheinz Riedle 54 on 16 September

John Aldridge 61 on 18 September



Kevin Lewis 79 on 19 September

Anke Preuss 27 on 22 September

Harry Kewell 41 on 22 September

John Arne Riise 39 on 24 September

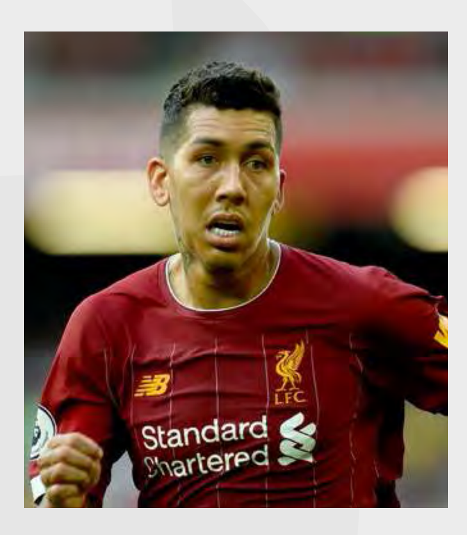
Kirsty Linnett 26 on 24 September

Ronnie Whelan 58 on 25 September



2019/20 Fixtures & Results

AUGUST		SCORE/KO	TV	SCORERS
Sun 04	Manchester City (CS, N)	1-1*	BT	Matip (pens: Shaqiri, Lallana, Chamberlain, Salah)
Fri 09	**Norwich City (H)**	**4-1**	**Sky**	**Hanley (OG), Salah, Van Dijk, Origi**
Wed 14	Chelsea (Super Cup, N)	2-2**	BT	Mane 2 (pens: Firmino, Fabinho, Origi, A-Arnold, Salah)
Sat 17	Southampton (A)	2-1		Mane, Firmino
Sat 24	**Arsenal (H)**	**3-1**	**Sky**	**Matip, Salah 2 (1 pen)**
Sat 31	Burnley (A)	3-0	Sky	Wood (OG), Mane, Firmino
SEPTEMBER				
Sat 14	**Newcastle United (H)**	**12.30pm**	**BT**	
Tue 17	Napoli (UCL Matchday 1, A)	8pm	BT	
Sun 22	Chelsea (A)	4.30pm	Sky	
Wed 25	MK Dons (Carabao Cup 3, A)	7.45pm	Sky	
Sat 28	Sheffield United (A)	12.30pm	BT	
OCTOBER				
Wed 02	Salzburg (UCL Matchday 2, H)	8pm	BT	
Sat 05	**Leicester City (H)**	**3pm**		
Sun 20	Manchester United (A)	4.30pm	Sky	
Wed 23	Genk (UCL Matchday 3, A)	8pm	BT	
Sun 27	**Tottenham Hotspur (H)**	**4.30pm**	**Sky**	
Wed 30	Carabao Cup 4	TBC		
NOVEMBER				
Sat 02	Aston Villa (A)	3pm		
Tue 05	Genk (UCL Matchday 4, H)	8pm	BT	
Sat 09	**Manchester City (H)**	**3pm**		
Sat 23	Crystal Palace (A)	3pm		
Wed 27	Napoli (UCL Matchday 5, H)	8pm	BT	
Sat 30	**Brighton (H)**	**3pm**		
DECEMBER				
Wed 04	**Everton (H)**	**8pm**	**AP**	
Sat 07	Bournemouth (A)	3pm		
Tue 10	Salzburg (UCL Matchday 6, A)	5.55pm	BT	
Sat 14	**Watford (H)**	**3pm**		
T/W 17/18	Club World Championship SF	TBC		
Wed 18	Carabao Cup QF	TBC		
Sat 21	Club World Championship F/3rd	TBC		
Thu 26	Leicester City (A)	3pm	AP	
Sat 28	**Wolverhampton W (H)**	**3pm**		
JANUARY				
Wed 01	**Sheffield United (H)**	**3pm**		
Sat 04	FA Cup 3	TBC		
Wed 08	Carabao Cup SF 1	TBC		
Sat 11	Tottenham Hotspur (A)	3pm		
Sat 18	**Manchester United (H)**	**3pm**		
Tue 21	Wolverhampton W (A)	7.45pm		
Sat 25	FA Cup 4	TBC		
Wed 29	Carabao Cup SF 2	TBC		
FEBRUARY				
Sat 01	**Southampton (H)**	**3pm**		
Sat 08/15	Norwich City (A)	TBC		
T/W 18/19	UCL last 16 1	TBC	BT	
Sat 22	**West Ham United (H)**	**3pm**		
T/W 25/26	UCL last 16 1	TBC	BT	
Sat 29	Watford (A)	3pm		
MARCH				
Sun 01	Carabao Cup final (N)	TBC		
Wed 04	FA Cup 5	TBC		
Sat 07	**Bournemouth (H)**	**3pm**		
T/W 10/11	UCL last 16 2	TBC	BT	
Sat 14	Everton (A)	3pm		
T/W 17/18	UCL last 16 2	TBC	BT	
Sat 21	**Crystal Palace (H)**	**3pm**		
Sat 21	FA Cup 6	TBC		
APRIL				
Sat 04	Manchester City (A)	3pm		
T/W 07/08	UCL QF 1	TBC	BT	
Sat 11	**Aston Villa (H)**	**3pm**		
T/W 14/15	UCL QF 2	TBC	BT	
Sat 18	Brighton (A)	3pm		
Sat 18	FA Cup SF	TBC		
Sat 25	**Burnley (H)**	**3pm**		
T/W 28/29	UCL SF 1	TBC	BT	
MAY				
Sat 02	Arsenal (A)	3pm		
T/W 05/06	UCL SF 2	TBC	BT	
Sat 09	**Chelsea (H)**	**3pm**		
Sun 17	Newcastle United (A)	3pm		
Sat 23	FA Cup final (N)	TBC		
Sat 30	UCL final (N)	TBC	BT	
TBC	West Ham United (A)	TBC		







All fixtures subject to change. AP = Amazon Prime *lost 5-4 on pens ** won 5-4 on pens



NEIL MELLOR

Virgil van Dijk has helped Alexander-Arnold, Robertson and Matip to flourish and will be a calming presence for Adrian

Adrian could not have settled into playing for Liverpool any better. He was thrown into action more quickly than he could ever have anticipated, following Alisson's unfortunate injury against Norwich City, when he had arrived at Anfield thinking he would be second choice.

Alisson's injury was a huge blow, especially given how he performed last season, but it gave Adrian an immediate chance to step in and he has done so very well. His penalty save to win the Super Cup in Istanbul was a real positive start and an important confidence booster because goalkeeper is different to every other position.

When you're an outfield player you can work together as a team, but goalkeeper is an individual position where mistakes are magnified. Starting well at a new club when you're a goalkeeper is vital.

Having the best centre-half in world football ahead of him is, of course, helpful, but it takes time to forge an understanding with your defenders. There have been a couple of instances, notably Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's chance for Arsenal at Anfield, where Adrian has made decisions he might have needed to make as a West Ham goalkeeper, but not at Liverpool. Virgil van Dijk had that situation covered and he'll now understand what quality he has in front of him.

Adrian did make a goal-costing error at Southampton, but he also made a crucial save from Maya Yoshida in that 2-1 win and a big save from Chris Wood in the second minute at Burnley. If he pushes Wood's shot out towards Ashley Barnes it's 1-0 and the momentum of the game changes, instead he pushes it away and keeps a clean sheet in a 3-0 win.

Liverpool are playing a high defensive line this season, a tactic which can catch you out if you don't press the ball well. It can be risky, but it hasn't cost Liverpool any results and it may be that Jürgen Klopp deploys it for certain games and not others.

The manager will work on the training ground to get it right knowing his team has pace in defence. Not many players can outrun van Dijk while Trent Alexander-Arnold and Andy Robertson have both got good recovery pace. When Alisson, who is capable of sweeping up behind them, is back that will also be a factor plus VAR now gives defenders the advantage in previously marginal offside decisions.

I'm not a fan of VAR. I think it's something that will grow on me, but I can't get my head around the way certain rules favour defenders over attackers. The laws of the game need addressing to ensure VAR is fair.

From VAR to VVD, it was funny seeing van Dijk sat next to Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo in Monaco (see below) waiting to hear which of the trio had been voted UEFA Men's Player of the Year. They get 40-50 goals every season and are phenomenal, so for van Dijk to not only be there alongside them, but beat them to the award, is testament to his impact for Liverpool. He's the first defender to win it and did so because he's changed Liverpool defensively. He's quick, he's strong, he reads the game and players can't get past him. He looks like he has different gears to go through, like there's even more to come.

His presence has also helped Joel Matip – who was outstanding at the end of last season – to flourish and play so well that Joe Gomez must now be patient to get a game. You can also see how van Dijk has helped Alexander-Arnold to mature as a player.

Trent's defensive display at Burnley was outstanding. When he first got into the team he committed himself or dived into tackles, but he has seen how van Dijk never goes to the floor and taken it onboard.

Virgil delays opponents and gives himself time to make tackles and I think Alexander-Arnold, Robertson and Matip have all learned from watching him, something that has benefitted them, Liverpool and Adrian as he settles in here.



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